V. I. LENIN

WHAT THE "FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE" ARE AND HOW THEY FIGHT THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

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FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE • MOSCOW

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

V. I. LENIN

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A Reply to Articles
in the *Russkoye Bogatstvo*
Opposing the Marxists[1]

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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CONTENTS

	Page
PART I	7
Publisher's Note	107
Note to the Present Edition	108
PART III	111
Appendix I	257
Appendix II	259
Appendix III	285
NOTES	294

PART I

The *Russkoye Bogatstvo*[2] has launched a campaign against the Social-Democrats. Last year, in issue No. 10, one of the leading lights of this magazine, Mr. N. Mikhailovsky, announced a forthcoming "polemic" against "our so-called Marxists, or Social-Democrats." Then followed an article by Mr. S. Krivenko entitled "Our Cultural Free-lances" (in No. 12), and one by Mr. N. Mikhailovsky entitled "Literature and Life" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1894, Nos. 1 and 2). As to the magazine's own views on our economic realities, these have been most fully expounded by Mr. S. Yuzhakov in an article entitled "Problems of the Economic Development of Russia" (in Nos. 11 and 12). While in general claiming to present in their magazine the ideas and tactics of the true "friends of the people," these gentlemen are archenemies of the Social-Democrats. So let us examine these "friends of the people," their criticism of Marxism, their ideas and their tactics.

Mr. N. Mikhailovsky devotes his attention chiefly to the theoretical principles of Marxism and therefore specially stops to examine the mate-

rialist conception of history. After giving a general outline of the contents of the voluminous Marxist literature that enunciates this doctrine, Mr. Mikhailovsky launches into his criticism with the following tirade:

"First of all," he says, "the question naturally arises: in which of his works did Marx set forth his materialist conception of history? In *Capital* he gave us an example of the combination of logical power with erudition and a painstaking investigation of all the economic literature as well as of the pertinent facts. He brought to light again theoreticians of economic science who had been long forgotten or who are not known to anybody today, and did not overlook the most minute details in the reports of factory inspectors or the evidence given by experts before various special commissions; in a word, he overhauled an overwhelming amount of factual material, partly in order to provide arguments for, and partly to illustrate, his economic theories. If he has created a 'completely new' conception of the historical process, if he has explained the whole past of mankind from a new point of view and has summarized all philosophico-historical theories that have hitherto existed, then he must of course have done so with equal thoroughness: must indeed have reviewed and subjected to critical analysis all the known theories of the historical process and analyzed a mass of facts of world history. The comparison with Darwin, so customary in Marxist literature, serves still more to confirm this idea. What does Darwin's whole work amount to? Certain closely interconnected generalizing ideas

crowning a veritable Mont Blanc of factual material. But where is the corresponding work by Marx? It does not exist. And not only does no such work by Marx exist, but there is none to be found in all Marxist literature, in spite of its voluminousness and extensiveness."

This whole tirade is highly characteristic and helps us to understand how little the public understands *Capital* and Marx. Overwhelmed by the vast weight and cogency of the exposition, they bow and scrape before Marx, laud him, and at the same time entirely lose sight of the basic content of his doctrine and blithely continue to chant the old songs of "subjective sociology." In this connection one cannot help recalling the pointed epigraph Kautsky selected for his book on the economic teachings of Marx:

> *Wer wird nicht einen Klopstock loben?*
> *Doch wird ihn jeder lesen? Nein.*
> *Wir wollen weniger erhoben,*
> *Und fleissiger gelesen sein!**

Just so! Mr. Mikhailovsky should praise Marx less and read him more diligently, or, better still, put a little more thought into what he is reading.

"In *Capital* Marx gave us an example of the combination of logical power with erudition," says Mr. Mikhailovsky. In this phrase Mr. Mikhailovsky

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* Who would not praise a Klopstock? But will everybody read him? No. We would like to be exalted less, but read more diligently. (*Lessing.*)—*Tr.*

has given us a model of brilliant phrasemongering combined with absence of meaning—a certain Marxist observed. And the observation is an entirely just one. For, indeed, how did this logical power of Marx's manifest itself. What were its effects? Reading Mr. Mikhailovsky's tirade just quoted, one might think that this power was entirely concentrated on "economic theories," in the narrowest sense of the term—and nothing more. And in order still further to emphasize the narrow limits of the field in which Marx displayed his logical power, Mr. Mikhailovsky lays stress on the "most minute details," on the "painstakingness," on the "theoreticians who are not known to anybody," and so forth. It would thus appear that Marx contributed nothing essentially new or noteworthy to the methods of constructing these theories, that he left the limits of economic science just as they had been with the earlier economists, not extending them and not contributing a "completely new" conception of the science itself. Yet anybody who has read *Capital* knows that this is absolutely untrue. In this connection one cannot refrain from recalling what Mr. Mikhailovsky wrote about Marx sixteen years ago when arguing with that vulgar bourgeois, Mr. Y. Zhukovsky.[3] Perhaps the times were different, perhaps sentiments were fresher—at any rate, the tone and content of Mr. Mikhailovsky's article was then entirely different.

"'. . . It is the ultimate aim of this work, to lay bare the law of development (in the original: das oekonomische Bewegungsgesetz—the economic law of motion) of modern society,' Karl Marx said in

reference to his *Capital*, and he adhered to this program with strict consistency." This is what Mr. Mikhailovsky said in 1877. Let us more closely examine this program, which—as the critic admits—has been adhered to with strict consistency. It is "to lay bare the economic law of development of modern society."

The very formulation confronts us with several questions that require elucidation. Why does Marx speak of "modern" society, when all the economists who preceded him spoke of society in general? In what sense does he use the word "modern," by what tokens does he distinguish this modern society? And further, what is meant by the economic law of motion of society? We are accustomed to hear from economists—and this, by the way, is one of the favourite ideas of the publicists and economists of the milieu to which the *Russkoye Bogatstvo* belongs—that only the production of values is subject solely to economic laws, whereas distribution, they declare, depends on politics, on the nature of the influence exercised on society by the government, the intelligentsia, and so forth. In what sense, then, does Marx speak of the economic law of motion of society, even referring to this law as a Naturgesetz—a law of nature? How is this to be understood, when so many of our native sociologists have covered reams of paper with asseverations to the effect that the sphere of social phenomena is distinct from the sphere of the phenomena of natural history, and that therefore an absolutely distinct "subjective method in sociology" must be applied in the investigation of the former?

These perplexities arise naturally and necessarily, and, of course, one must be utterly ignorant to evade them when dealing with *Capital*. To elucidate these questions, we shall first quote one more passage from the Preface to *Capital*—only a few lines lower down:

"[From] my standpoint," says Marx, "the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history."[4]

One has merely to compare, say, the two passages just quoted from the Preface in order to see that this is precisely the basic idea of *Capital*, which, as we have heard, is pursued with strict consistency and with rare logical power. In connection with all this, let us first note two circumstances: Marx speaks only of one "economic formation of society," the capitalist formation; that is, he says that he investigated the law of development of this formation only and of no other. That, in the first place. And in the second place, let us note the methods Marx used in working out his deductions. These methods consisted, as we have just heard from Mr. Mikhailovsky, in a "painstaking investigation of the pertinent facts."

Let us now proceed to examine this basic idea of *Capital*, which our subjective philosopher so adroitly tried to evade. In what, properly speaking, does the concept economic formation of society consist, and in what sense can and must the development of such a formation be regarded as a process of natural history?—such are the questions that now confront us. I have already pointed out that from the standpoint of the old economists and sociologists (not

old for Russia), the concept economic formation of society is entirely superfluous: they talk of society in general, they argue with Spencer and his like about the nature of society in general, about the aims and essence of society in general, and so forth. In their reasonings, these subjective sociologists rely on such arguments as that the aim of society is to benefit all its members, that therefore justice demands such and such an organization, and that a system that is out of harmony with this ideal organization ("Sociology must start with a utopia"—these words of one of the authors of the subjective method, Mr. Mikhailovsky, are eminently characteristic of the essence of their methods) is abnormal and should be set aside. "The essential task of sociology," Mr. Mikhailovsky, for instance, argues, "is to ascertain the social conditions under which any particular requirement of human nature is satisfied." As you see, this sociologist is interested only in a society that satisfies human nature, and is not at all interested in some forms of society, which, moreover, may be based on phenomena so out of harmony with "human nature," as the enslavement of the majority by the minority. You also see that from the standpoint of this sociologist the idea of regarding the development of society as a process of natural history is totally out of the question. ("Having recognized something to be desirable or undesirable, the sociologist must discover the conditions whereby the desirable can be realized, or the undesirable eliminated"—"whereby such and such ideals can be realized"—this same Mr. Mikhailovsky reasons.) This is not all: development

is also out of the question; there can be only deviations from the "desirable," "defects" that may have occurred in history as a result . . . as a result of the fact that people were not clever enough, did not properly understand what human nature demands, were unable to discover the conditions required for the realization of such a rational system. It is obvious that Marx's basic idea that the development of the economic formations of society is a process of natural history cuts at the very root of this childish morality which lays claim to the title of sociology. By what method did Marx arrive at this basic idea? He arrived at it by singling out from the various spheres of social life the economic sphere, by singling out from all social relations the *relations of production*, as being the basic and primary relations that determine all other relations. Marx himself has described the course of his reasoning on this question as follows:

"The first work which I undertook for a solution of the doubts which assailed me was a critical review of the Hegelian philosophy of law. . . . My investigation led to the result that legal relations as well as forms of state, are to be grasped neither from themselves nor from the so-called general development of the human mind, but rather have their roots in the material conditions of life, the sum total of which Hegel, following the example of the Englishmen and Frenchmen of the eighteenth century, combines under the name of 'civil society,' that however the anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy. . . . The general result at which I arrived . . . can be briefly formulated as follows: In the social production of their life men

enter into definite relations . . . these *relations of production* correspond to a definite stage of development of their material forces of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been at work before. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its

own consciousness; on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social productive forces and the relations of production. . . . In broad outlines we can designate the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal, and the modern bourgeois modes of production as so many progressive epochs in the economic formation of society."[5]

This idea of materialism in sociology was in itself a stroke of genius. Naturally, *for the time being* it was only a hypothesis, but one which for the first time created the possibility of a strictly scientific approach to historical and social problems. Hitherto, being unable to descend to such simple and primary relations as the relations of production, the sociologists proceeded directly to investigate and study the political and legal forms, stumbled on the fact that these forms arise out of certain ideas held by men in the period in question—and there they stopped; it appeared as if social relations were established by men consciously. But this deduction, which was fully expressed in the idea of the *Contrat Social*[6] (traces of which are very noticeable in all systems of utopian Socialism), was in complete contradiction to all historical observations. Never has it been the case, nor is it the case now, that the members of society should conceive the sum total of the social relations in which they live as something definite and integral, as something pervaded by some principle; on the contrary, the mass of people adapt themselves to these relations unconsciously, and have so little conception of them as specific

historical social relations, that the explanation, for instance, of the relations of exchange, under which people have lived for centuries, was found only in very recent times. Materialism removed this contradiction by carrying the analysis deeper, to the origin of these very social ideas of man; and its conclusion that the course of ideas depends on the course of things is the only one compatible with scientific psychology. Moreover, this hypothesis was the first to elevate sociology to the level of a science from yet another aspect. Hitherto, sociologists had found it difficult to distinguish in the complex network of social phenomena which phenomena are important and which unimportant (that is the root of subjectivism in sociology) and had been unable to discover any objective criterion for such a distinction. Materialism provided an absolutely objective criterion by singling out the "relations of production" as the structure of society, and by making it possible to apply to these relations that general scientific criterion of recurrence whose applicability to sociology the subjectivists denied. As long as they confined themselves to ideological social relations (i.e., such as, before taking shape, pass through man's consciousness*) they were unable to observe recurrence and regularity in the social phenomena of the various countries, and their science was at best only a description of these phenomena, a collection of raw material. The analysis of material social relations (those, that is, that take

* We are, of course, referring all the time to the consciousness of *social* relations and no others.

shape without passing through man's consciousness; when exchanging products men enter into relations of production without even realizing that social relations of production are involved in the act) made it at once possible to observe recurrence and regularity and to generalize the systems of the various countries so as to arrive at the single fundamental concept: *form of society*. It was this generalization alone that made it possible to proceed from the description of social phenomena (and their evaluation from the standpoint of an ideal) to their strictly scientific analysis, which, let us say by way of example, singles out what distinguishes one capitalist country from another and investigates what is common to all of them.

Thirdly and finally, another reason why this hypothesis for the first time made a *scientific* sociology possible was that the reduction of social relations to relations of production, and of the latter to the level of the forces of production, alone provided a firm basis for the conception that the development of forms of society is a process of natural history. And it goes without saying that without such a view there can be no social science. (For instance, the subjectivists, although they admitted that historical phenomena conform to law, were incapable of regarding their evolution as a process of natural history, precisely because they stopped at the social ideas and aims of man and were unable to reduce these ideas and aims to material social relations.)

But now Marx, having expressed this hypothesis in the 'forties, set out to study the factual

(nota bene) material. He took one of the economic formations of society—the system of commodity production—and on the basis of a vast mass of data (which he studied for no less than twenty-five years) gave a most detailed analysis of the laws governing the functioning of this formation and its development. This analysis is strictly confined to the relations of production between the members of society: without ever resorting to factors other than relations of production to explain the matter Marx makes it possible to discern how the commodity organization of social economy develops, how it becomes transformed into the capitalist organization, creating the antagonistic (within the bounds now of the relations of production) classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, how it develops the productivity of social labour, and thereby introduces an element which comes into irreconcilable contradiction with the foundations of this capitalist organization itself.

Such is the *skeleton* of *Capital*. But the whole point is that Marx did not content himself with this skeleton, that he did not confine himself solely to an "economic theory" in the ordinary sense of the term, that while *explaining* the structure and development of the given form of society *exclusively* in terms of relations of production, he nevertheless everywhere and always went on to trace the superstructure that corresponds to these relations of production and clothed the skeleton in flesh and blood. *Capital* has enjoyed such tremendous success precisely because this book of "a German economist" exhibited the whole capitalist social formation to the

reader as a living thing—with its everyday aspects, with the actual social manifestation of the antagonism of classes inherent in the relations of production, with the bourgeois political superstructure which protects the rule of the capitalist class, with the bourgeois ideas of liberty, equality and so forth, with the bourgeois family relations. It will now be clear that the comparison with Darwin is perfectly accurate: *Capital* is nothing but "certain closely interconnected generalizing ideas crowning a veritable Mont Blanc of factual material." And if anybody who has read *Capital* has contrived not to notice these generalizing ideas, it is not the fault of Marx, who pointed to these ideas even in the Preface, as we have seen. And that is not all; such a comparison is correct not only from the external aspect (which for some unknown reason particularly interests Mr. Mikhailovsky), but from the internal aspect too. Just as Darwin put an end to the view that the species of animals and plants are unconnected among themselves, fortuitous, "created by God" and immutable, and was the first to put biology on an absolutely scientific basis by establishing the mutability and succession of species, so Marx put an end to the view that society is a mechanical aggregation of individuals, which allows of any kind of modification at the will of the powers that be (or, what amounts to the same thing, at the will of society and the government) and which arises and changes in a fortuitous way; he was the first to put sociology on a scientific basis by establishing the concept of the economic formation of society as the sum total of given relations of production and by establishing

the fact that the development of these formations is a process of natural history.

Now—since the appearance of *Capital*—the materialist conception of history is no longer a hypothesis, but a scientifically demonstrated proposition. And until some other attempt is made to give a scientific explanation of the functioning and development of any form of society—form of society, mind you, and not the mode of life of any country or people, or even class, etc.—another attempt which would be just as capable as materialism of introducing order into the "pertinent facts" and of presenting a living picture of a definite formation and at the same time of explaining it in a strictly scientific way, until then the materialist conception of history will be synonymous with social science. Materialism is not "primarily a scientific conception of history," as Mr. Mikhailovsky thinks, but the only scientific conception of history.

And now, can one imagine anything funnier than the fact that there are people who have read *Capital* and contrived not to discover materialism in it! Where is it?—asks Mr. Mikhailovsky in sincere perplexity.

He read the *Communist Manifesto* and failed to notice that the explanation it gives of modern systems—legal, political, family, religious and philosophical—is a materialist one, and that even the criticism of the socialist and communist theories seeks and finds their roots in such and such relations of production.

He read *The Poverty of Philosophy* and failed to notice that the examination it contains of Prou-

dhon's sociology is made from the materialist standpoint, that the criticism of the solution propounded by Proudhon for the most diverse historical problems is based on the principles of materialism, and that the indications given by the author himself as to where the data for the solution of these problems are to be sought all amount to references to relations of production.

He read *Capital* and failed to notice that he had before him a model scientific analysis, in accordance with the materialist method, of one—the most complex—of the forms of society, a model recognized by all and surpassed by none. And here he sits and exercises his mighty brain over the profound question: "In which of his works did Marx set forth his materialist conception of history?"

Anybody acquainted with Marx would answer this question by another: in which of his works did Marx *not* set forth his materialist conception of history? But probably, Mr. Mikhailovsky will learn of Marx's materialist investigations only when they are classified and properly indexed in some historico-sophistical work of some Kareyev or other under the heading "Economic Materialism."

But the funniest of all is that Mr. Mikhailovsky accuses Marx of not having "reviewed (*sic*!) all the known theories of the historical process." This is amusing indeed. Of what did nine-tenths of these theories consist? Of purely a priori, dogmatic, abstract disquisitions on: what is society, what is progress? and the like. (I purposely take examples which are dear to the heart and mind of Mr. Mikhailovsky.) But, then, these theories are useless be-

cause of the very fact that they exist, they are useless because of their basic methods, because of their utter and unrelieved metaphysics. For, to begin by asking what is society and what is progress, is to begin from the end. Whence are you to get your conception of society and progress in general when you have not studied a single form of society in particular, when you have been unable even to establish this conception, when you have been unable even to approach a serious factual investigation, an objective analysis of social relations of any kind? That is the most obvious earmark on metaphysics, with which every science began: as long as people did not know how to study the facts, they always invented a priori general theories, which were always sterile. The metaphysical chemist who did not know how to investigate the chemical processes themselves would invent a theory about the nature of the force of chemical affinity. The metaphysical biologist would talk about the nature of life and the vital force. The metaphysical psychologist would reason about the nature of the soul. The method itself was an absurd one. You cannot argue about the soul without having explained the psychical processes in particular: here progress must consist in abandoning general theories and philosophical disquisitions about the nature of the soul, and in knowing how to put the study of the facts which characterize any particular psychical process on a scientific footing. And therefore Mr. Mikhailovsky's accusation is exactly as though a metaphysical psychologist, who all his life has been writing "inquiries" into the nature of the soul (without pre-

cisely knowing the explanation of a single psychical phenomenon, even the simplest), were to accuse a scientific psychologist of not having reviewed all the known theories of the soul. He, the scientific psychologist, has discarded all philosophical theories of the soul and has set about making a direct study of the material substratum of psychical phenomena—the nervous processes—and has given, let us say, an analysis and explanation of such and such psychological processes. And our metaphysical psychologist reads this work and praises it: the description of the processes and the study of the facts, he says, are good; but he is not satisfied. "Pardon me," he exclaims excitedly, hearing people around him speak of the absolutely new conception of psychology given by this scientist, of his special method of scientific psychology: "Pardon me," the philosopher cries heatedly, "in what work is this method expounded? Why, this work contains 'nothing but facts.' There is no trace in it of a review of 'all the known philosophical theories of the soul.' This is not the work appropriate to this by any means!"

In the same way, of course, neither is *Capital* the appropriate work for a metaphysical sociologist who does not observe the sterility of a priori discussions about the nature of society and who does not understand that such methods, instead of studying and elucidating, only serve to insinuate into the concept society either the bourgeois ideas of a British shopkeeper or the philistine socialist ideals of a Russian democrat—and nothing more. That is why all these philosophico-historical theories arose and

burst like soap bubbles, being at best but a symptom of the social ideas and relations of their time, and not advancing one iota man's *understanding* of even a few, but real, social relations (and not such as "harmonize with human nature"). The gigantic step forward which Marx took in this respect consisted precisely in the fact that he discarded all these discussions about society and progress in general and gave a *scientific* analysis of *one* society and of *one* progress—capitalist society and capitalist progress. And Mr. Mikhailovsky condemns him for having begun from the beginning and not from the end, for having begun with an analysis of the facts and not with final conclusions, with a study of particular, historically-determined social relations and not with general theories about the nature of social relations in general! And he asks: "Where is the corresponding work?" O, sapient subjective sociologist!!

If our subjective philosopher had confined himself solely to expressing his perplexity as to where, in which work, materialism is proved, it would not have been quite so bad. But, in spite of the fact (and perhaps for the very reason) that he has nowhere found even an exposition of the materialist conception of history, let alone proof of it, he begins to ascribe to this doctrine claims which it has never made. He quotes a passage from Blos to the effect that Marx had proclaimed an entirely new *conception* of history, and without further ado goes on to declare that this theory claims that it has "explained to mankind its past," explained "the whole (*sic*!!?) past of mankind," and so on. But this is

utterly false! The theory claims to explain only the capitalist social organization, and no other. If the application of materialism to the analysis and explanation of one form of society yielded such brilliant results, it is quite natural that materialism in history already ceases to be a mere hypothesis and becomes a scientifically tested theory; it is quite natural that the necessity for such a method should extend to the other forms of society, even though they have not been subjected to special factual investigation and to detailed analysis—just as the idea of transformism, which has been proved in relation to a sufficiently large number of facts, is extended to the whole realm of biology, even though it has not yet been possible definitely to establish the transformation of certain species of animals and plants. And just as transformism does not at all claim to have explained the "whole" history of the formation of species, but only to have placed the methods of this explanation on a scientific basis, so materialism in history has never claimed to explain everything, but only to have pointed out the "only scientific," to use Marx's expression (*Capital*), method of explaining history.[7] One may therefore judge what ingenious, earnest and seemly methods of controversy Mr. Mikhailovsky employs when he first falsifies Marx by ascribing to materialism in history the absurd claim of "explaining everything," of finding "the key to all historical locks" (claims which were, of course, refuted by Marx immediately and in a very biting style in his "Letter"[8] on Mikhailovsky's articles), then makes fun of these claims, which he himself invented, and,

finally, accurately quoting Engels' ideas—accurately, because in this case a quotation and not a paraphrase is given—to the effect that political economy as the materialists understand it "has still to be brought into being" and that "such economic science as we have up to the present is almost exclusively limited to" the history of capitalist society[9]—comes to the conclusion that "these words greatly narrow the field of operation of economic materialism"! What infinite naïveté, or what infinite conceit a man must have to believe that such tricks will pass unnoticed! He first falsifies Marx, then makes fun of his own falsehoods, then accurately quotes certain ideas—and after that has the insolence to declare that the latter narrow the field of operation of economic materialism!

The nature and quality of Mr. Mikhailovsky's fun may be seen from the following example: "Marx nowhere proves them"—i.e., the foundations of the theory of economic materialism—says Mr. Mikhailovsky. "True, Marx and Engels thought of writing a work of a philosophico-historical and historico-philosophical character, and even did write one (1845-46), but it was never published.[10] Engels says: 'the finished portion [of this work] consists of an exposition of the materialist conception of history which proves only how incomplete our knowledge of economic history still was at that time.' Thus," concludes Mr. Mikhailovsky, "the fundamental points of 'scientific Socialism' and of the theory of economic materialism were discovered, and were then expounded in the *Manifesto*, at a time when, as is admitted by one of the authors himself,

their knowledge for such a work was still meagre."

A charming manner of criticism, is it not? Engels says that their knowledge of economic "history" was still meagre and that for this reason they did not publish their work of a "general" historico-philosophical character. Mr. Mikhailovsky garbles this to make it mean that their knowledge was meagre "for such a work" as the elaboration of "the fundamental points of scientific Socialism," that is, of a scientific criticism of the "bourgeois" system, already given in the *Manifesto*. One or the other: either Mr. Mikhailovsky cannot grasp the difference between an attempt to embrace the whole philosophy of history, and an attempt to explain the bourgeois regime scientifically, or he thinks that Marx and Engels did not possess sufficient knowledge for a criticism of political economy. If the latter is the case, it is very cruel of him not to acquaint us with his reasons for assuming this deficiency of knowledge, and not to give his amendments and additions. Marx's and Engels' decision not to publish the historico-philosophical work and to concentrate their efforts on a scientific analysis of one social organization only testifies to a very high degree of scientific scrupulousness. Mr. Mikhailovsky's decision to make fun of this by a little addition to the effect that Marx and Engels expounded their views when they themselves confessed that their knowledge was inadequate to elaborate them, is only indicative of methods of controversy which testify neither to intelligence nor to a sense of decency.

Here is another sample: "More was done by Marx's alter ego, Engels, to prove economic materialism as a theory of history," says Mr. Mikhailovsky. "He has written a special historical work, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State in the Light of* (im Anschluss) *the Researches of Morgan.* This 'Anschluss' is noteworthy. The book of the American Morgan appeared many years after Marx and Engels had announced the principles of economic materialism and entirely independently of the latter." And so, says Mikhailovsky, "the economic materialists associated themselves" with this book; and, since there was no struggle of classes in prehistoric times, they introduced an "amendment" to the formula of the materialist conception of history to the effect that, in addition to the production of material values, a determining factor is the production of man himself, i.e., procreation, which played a primary role in the primitive era, when the productivity of labour was still very undeveloped.

Engels says that "Morgan's great merit lies in . . . having found in the sex groups of the North American Indians the key to the most important, hitherto insoluble, riddles of the earliest Greek, Roman and German history."[11]

"And so," quoth Mr. Mikhailovsky in this connection, "at the end of the 'forties there was discovered and proclaimed an absolutely new, materialist and truly scientific conception of history, which did for historical science what Darwin's theory did for modern natural science." But this conception—Mr. Mikhailovsky once more repeats—was never scientifically proved. "Not only was it never tested in a

large and varied field of factual material," (*Capital* is "not the appropriate" work: it contains only facts and painstaking investigations!) "but was not even sufficiently substantiated by at least a criticism and exclusion of other philosophico-historical systems." Engels' book—*Herrn E. Dührings Umwälzung der Wissenschaft**—represents "only clever attempts made in passing," and Mr. Mikhailovsky therefore considers it possible completely to ignore the vast number of essential questions dealt with in that work, in spite of the fact that these "clever attempts" very cleverly show the emptiness of sociologies which "start with utopias," and in spite of the fact that this book contains a detailed criticism of the "force theory," which asserts that political and legal systems determine economic systems and which is so fervently professed by the journalistic gentlemen of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*. Of course, it is much easier to utter a few meaningless phrases about a work than to make a serious analysis of even one of the problems that are materialistically solved in it. And it is also safe—for the censor will probably never pass a translation of the book, and Mr. Mikhailovsky may call it a clever book without any danger to his subjective philosophy.

Even more characteristic and edifying (as an illustration to the saying that man was given a tongue to conceal his thoughts—or to lend vacuity to the form of thought) are his comments on Marx's *Capital*: "There are brilliant pages of history in *Capital*,

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* *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* (*Anti-Dühring*).—*Tr.*

BUT" (that wonderful "but"! It is not so much a "but," as that famous "mais," which translated means "the ears never grow higher than the forehead") "by virtue of the very purpose of the book they concern only one definite historical period; they do not so much affirm the basic propositions of economic materialism as simply deal with the economic aspect of a certain group of historical phenomena." In other words, *Capital*—which is devoted solely to a study of capitalist society—gives a materialist analysis of that society and its superstructures, "*BUT*" Mr. Mikhailovsky prefers to say nothing about this analysis. It deals, don't you see, with only "one" period, whereas he, Mr. Mikhailovsky, wants to embrace all periods, and to embrace them in such a way as to say nothing about any one of them in particular. Of course, this aim—of embracing all periods without discussing any one of them in substance—can be achieved only in one way—by uttering commonplaces and phrases, "brilliant" and empty. And nobody can compare with Mr. Mikhailovsky in the art of making shift with phrases. It turns out that it is not worth dealing (separately) with the substance of Marx's investigations for the reason that he, Marx, "not so much affirms the basic propositions of economic materialism as simply deals with the economic aspect of a certain group of historical phenomena." What profundity! He "does not affirm," but "simply deals with"! How easy it is to dodge any issue by phrasemongering! For instance, when Marx repeatedly shows that civil equality, free contract and similar foundations of the law-governed state rest on commodity-producer rela-

tions—what is that? Does he thereby affirm materialism, or "simply" deal with it? With his characteristic modesty, our philosopher refrains from giving a reply on the substance of the question and directly proceeds to draw conclusions from his "clever attempts" to talk brilliantly and say nothing.

"No wonder," the conclusion runs, "that forty years after the theory which claimed to elucidate world history was announced, ancient Greek, Roman and German histories still remained unsolved riddles for it; and the key to these riddles was provided, firstly, by a man who had absolutely no connection with the theory of economic materialism and knew nothing about it, and, secondly, with the help of a factor which was not economic. A rather amusing impression is produced by the term 'production of man himself,' i.e., procreation, which Engels seizes upon in order to preserve at least a verbal connection with the basic formula of economic materialism. He was, however, obliged to admit that for many ages the life of mankind did not proceed in accordance with this formula." Your mode of argument, Mr. Mikhailovsky, is indeed "a wonder." The theory was that in order to "elucidate" history one must seek the foundations not in ideological relations—but in material social relations. Lack of factual material made it impossible to apply this method to an analysis of certain very important phenomena in ancient European history—for instance, of the gentile organization[12]—which in consequence remained a riddle.*

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* Here too Mr. Mikhailovsky does not miss an opportunity of making fun: how is that—a scientific conception of

But lo, the wealth of material collected by Morgan in America enables Engels to analyze the nature of the gentile organization; and he comes to the conclusion that one must seek its explanation not in ideological relations (e.g., legal or religious), but in material relations. Obviously, this fact is a brilliant confirmation of the materialist method, and nothing more. And when Mr. Mikhailovsky *rebukes* this doctrine on the ground, firstly, that the key to most difficult historical riddles was found by a man "who had absolutely no connection" with the theory of economic materialism, one can only wonder at the degree to which people can fail to distinguish what speaks in their favour from what cruelly demolishes them. Secondly—our philosopher argues—procreation is not an economic factor. But where have you read in Marx or in Engels that they necessarily spoke of economic materialism? When they described their world outlook they called it simply materialism. Their basic idea (which was quite definitely expressed, for instance, in the passage from Marx above quoted) was that social relations are divided into material relations and ideological relations. The latter merely constitute a superstructure on the former, which arise apart from the volition and consciousness of man as (a result of) the form of man's activity aiming at the preservation of his

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history, and yet ancient history remains a riddle! Mr. Mikhailovsky, take any textbook, and you will find that the problem of the gentile organization is one of the most difficult, and a host of theories have been advanced to explain it.

existence. The explanation of political and legal forms—Marx says in the passage quoted—must be sought in "the material conditions of life." Mr. Mikhailovsky surely does not think that the relations of procreation are ideological relations. The explanation given by Mr. Mikhailovsky in this connection is so characteristic that it deserves to be dwelt on. "However much we exercise our ingenuity on the question of 'procreation,'" he says, "and endeavour to establish at least a verbal connection between it and economic materialism, however much it may be interwoven in the complex web of phenomena of social life with other phenomena, including economic, it has its own physiological and psychical roots." (Is it suckling babes you are telling, Mr. Mikhailovsky, that procreation has physiological roots!? What sort of blarney is this?) "And this reminds us that the theoreticians of economic materialism have not settled accounts not only with history, but also with psychology. There can be no doubt that gentile ties have lost their significance in the history of civilized countries, but this can hardly be said with the same assurance of direct sexual and family ties. They have, of course, undergone considerable modification under the pressure of the increasing complexity of life in general, but with a certain amount of dialectical dexterity it might be shown that not only legal, but also economic relations themselves constitute a 'superstructure' on sexual and family relations. We shall not dwell on this, but nevertheless would point to the institution of inheritance."

At last our philosopher has managed to leave the

sphere of empty phrasemongering* for facts, definite facts, which can be verified and which make it less easy to "blarney" about the substance of the matter. Let us then see how our critic of Marx shows that the institution of inheritance is a superstructure on sexual and family relations. "It is the products of economic production" ("the products of economic production"!! How literate! How euphonious! How elegant!) "that are transmitted by inheritance, and the institution of inheritance itself is to a certain degree determined by the fact of economic competition," argues Mr. Mikhailovsky. "But, firstly, non-material values are also transmitted by inheritance—as expressed in the concern to bring up children in the spirit of their fathers"—so the upbringing of children is part of the institution of inheritance! The Russian Civil Code, for example, contains a clause to the effect that "parents must endeavour by home upbringing to train their" (i.e., their children's) "morals and to further the aims of the government." Is this what our philosopher calls the institution of inheritance?—"and, secondly, even when we confine ourselves solely to the economic sphere, if the institution of inheritance is inconceivable without the products of production that are transmitted by inheritance, it is just as unthinkable without the products of 'procreation'—without

* How else, indeed, can one characterize it, when he accuses materialists of not having settled accounts with history but does not attempt to examine *literally a single one* of the numerous materialist explanations of various historical problems given by the materialists, or when he says: it could be proved, but we will not dwell on it?

them and without that complex and intense psychology which directly borders on them." (Do pay attention to the style: a complex psychology "borders on" the products of procreation! That is really exquisite!) And so, the institution of inheritance is a superstructure on family and sexual relations, because inheritance is inconceivable without procreation! Why, *this is a veritable discovery of America!* Until now everybody believed that procreation can explain the institution of inheritance just as little as the necessity for taking food can explain the institution of property. Until now everybody thought that if, for instance, in the era when the fief system[13] flourished in Russia, the land was not transmissible by inheritance (because it was only regarded as conditional property), the explanation was to be sought in the peculiarities of the social organization of the time. Mr. Mikhailovsky presumably thinks that the matter is to be explained simply by the fact that the psychology which bordered on the products of procreation of the fief-holder of that time was distinguished by insufficient complexity.

Scratch the "friend of the people"—one might say, paraphrasing the familiar saying—and you will find a bourgeois. For what other meaning can be attached to Mr. Mikhailovsky's reflections on the connection between the institution of inheritance and the upbringing of children, the psychology of procreation, and so on, except that the institution of inheritance is just as eternal, essential and sacred as the upbringing of children? True, Mr. Mikhailovsky tried to leave himself a loophole by declaring that "the institution of inheritance is to a certain degree deter-

mined by the fact of economic competition," but that is nothing but an attempt to avoid giving a definite answer to the question, and a futile attempt at that. How can we take cognizance of this statement when not a word is said about to what "certain degree" inheritance depends on competition; when absolutely *no explanation is given of what exactly this connection* between competition and the institution of inheritance is due to? As a matter of fact the institution of inheritance already presumes the existence of private property; and the latter arises only with the appearance of exchange. Its basis is in the already incipient specialization of social labour and the alienation of products in the market. For instance, as long as *all* the members of the primitive American Indian community produced in common all the articles they required, private property was impossible. But when division of labour made its way into the community and each of its members began to produce separately some one article or other and to sell it in the market, this material isolation of the commodity producers found expression in the institution of private property. Both private property and inheritance are categories of a social order in which separate, small (monogamous) families have already been formed and exchange has begun to develop. Mr. Mikhailovsky's example proves precisely the opposite of what he wanted to prove.

Mr. Mikhailovsky gives another factual reference—and this too is in its way a gem! "As regards gentile ties," he says, continuing to put materialism right, "they paled in the history of civilized peoples partially, it is true, under the rays of the influence

of the forms of production," (another subterfuge, this time more obvious still. What forms of production precisely? An empty phrase!) "but partially they became dissolved in their own continuation and generalization—in national ties." And so, national ties are a continuation and generalization of gentile ties! Mr. Mikhailovsky, evidently, borrows his ideas of the history of society from the fairy tale that is taught to schoolboys. The history of society—this copybook maxim runs—is that first there was the family, that nucleus of all society,* then the family grew into the tribe, and the tribe grew into the state. If Mr. Mikhailovsky impressively repeats this childish nonsense, it only goes to show—apart from everything else—that he has not the slightest inkling of the course even of Russian history. While one might speak of gentile life in ancient Russia, there can be no doubt that by the Middle Ages, the era of the Moscovite tsars, these gentile ties no longer existed, that is to say, the state was based on territorial unions and not gentile unions: the landlords and the monasteries took their peasants from various localities, and the village communities thus formed were purely territorial units. But one could hardly speak of national ties in the true sense of the word at that time: the state was divided into separate "lands," sometimes even prin-

* This is a purely bourgeois idea: separate, small families came to predominate only under the bourgeois regime; they were entirely nonexistent in prehistoric times. Nothing is more characteristic of the bourgeois than the ascription of the features of the modern system to all times and peoples.

cipalities, which preserved strong traces of former autonomy, peculiarities of administration, at times their own troops (the local boyars went to war at the head of their own companies), their own customs borders, and so forth. Only the modern period of Russian history (beginning approximately with the seventeenth century) is characterized by an actual amalgamation of all such regions, lands and principalities into a single whole. This amalgamation, most esteemed Mr. Mikhailovsky, was not brought about by gentile ties, nor even by their continuation and generalization: it was brought about by the growth of exchange between regions, the gradual growth of commodity circulation and the concentration of the small local markets into a single, all-Russian market. Since the leaders and masters of this process were the merchant capitalists, the creation of these national ties was nothing but the creation of bourgeois ties. By both his factual references Mr. Mikhailovsky has only defeated his own purpose and has given us nothing but examples of bourgeois banality; "banality," because he explained the institution of inheritance by procreation and its psychology, and nationality by gentile ties; "bourgeois," because he took the categories and superstructure of one historically-defined form of society (that based on exchange) for categories which are equally as general and eternal as the upbringing of children and "direct" sexual ties.

What is so highly characteristic here is that as soon as our subjective philosopher tried to pass from phrasemongering to concrete facts he landed in a puddle. And apparently he feels very much at

ease in this not over-clean position: there he sits, preening himself and splashing mud all around him. For instance, he wants to refute the thesis that history is a succession of episodes of the class struggle, and, declaring with an air of profundity that this is "extreme," he says: "The International Working Men's Association,[14] formed by Marx and organized for the purposes of the class struggle, did not prevent the French and German workers from cutting each other's throats and despoiling each other"—which, he asserts, proves that materialism has not settled accounts "with the demon of national vanity and national hatred." Such a statement reveals the critic's utter failure to understand that very real interests of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie constitute the principal basis for this hatred, and that to speak of national sentiment as an independent factor is only to gloss over the essence of the matter. But then we have already seen what a profound idea of nationality our philosopher has. Mr. Mikhailovsky cannot refer to the International except with the irony of a Burenin.[15] "Marx is the head of the International Working Men's Association, which, it is true, has fallen to pieces, but is due to be resurrected." Of course, if one discerns the nec plus ultra of international solidarity in a system of "fair" exchange, as the chronicler of home affairs in No. 2 of the *Russkoye Bogatstvo* asserts with philistine banality, and if one does not understand that exchange, fair and unfair, invariably presumes and includes the rule of the bourgeoisie, and that the cessation of international collisions is impossible unless the economic

organization which is based on exchange is destroyed, then this confining oneself to jeering at the International is understandable. It is then understandable why Mr. Mikhailovsky cannot grasp the simple truth that there is no other way of combating national hatred than by organizing and uniting the oppressed class for a struggle against the oppressor class in each separate country, and by the amalgamation of such national working-class organizations into a single international working-class army to fight international capital. As to the statement that the International did not prevent the workers from cutting each other's throats, it is enough to remind Mr. Mikhailovsky of the events of the Commune, which revealed the true attitude of the organized proletariat to the ruling classes who were waging the war.

What is most disgusting in Mr. Mikhailovsky's polemic are the methods he employs. If he is dissatisfied with the tactics of the International, if he does not share the ideas on behalf of which the European workers are organizing, let him at least criticize them bluntly and openly and set forth his own idea of what would be more expedient tactics and more correct views. As it is, no definite and clear objections are made, and all we get are senseless jibes scattered here and there among a welter of phrase-mongering. What can one call this but mud, especially when one bears in mind that a defence of the ideas and tactics of the International is not legally allowed in Russia? Such too are the methods Mr. Mikhailovsky employs when he argues against the Russian Marxists: without giving himself the

trouble to formulate any of their theses conscientiously and accurately, so as to subject them to direct and definite criticism, he prefers to fasten on fragments of Marxist arguments he happens to have heard and to garble them. Judge for yourselves: "Marx was too intelligent and too learned to think that it was he who discovered the idea of the historical necessity of social phenomena and their conformity to law. . . . The lower rungs" (of the Marxist ladder)* "do not know this," (that "the idea of historical necessity is not something newly invented or discovered by Marx, but a long established truth") "or, at least, they have only a vague idea of the centuries of intellectual effort and energy that were spent on the establishment of this truth."

Of course, statements of this kind may very well make an impression on people who hear of Marxism for the first time, and in their case the aim of the critic may be easily achieved, namely, to garble, scoff and "conquer" (such, it is said, is the way contributors to the *Russkoye Bogatstvo* speak of Mr. Mikhailovsky's articles). Anybody who has any

* In connection with this meaningless term it should be stated that Mr. Mikhailovsky singles out Marx (who is too intelligent and too learned to enable our critic to criticize any of his propositions directly and openly), after whom he places Engels ("not such a creative mind"), next more or less independent men like Kautsky—and then the other Marxists. Well, can such a classification have any serious value? If the critic is dissatisfied with the popularizers of Marx, what prevents him from correcting them on the basis of Marx? He does nothing of the kind. He evidently meant to be witty—but his wit fell flat.

knowledge of Marx at all will immediately perceive the utter falsity and sham of such methods. One may not agree with Marx, but one cannot deny that those of his views which constitute "something new" in relation to the earlier Socialists he did formulate with the utmost definiteness. The something new consisted in the fact that the earlier Socialists thought that to prove their views it was enough to point to the oppression of the masses under the existing regime, to point to the superiority of a system under which every man would receive what he himself had produced, to point out that this ideal system harmonizes with "human nature," with the conception of a rational and moral life, and so forth. Marx found it impossible to rest content with such a Socialism. He did not confine himself to describing the existing system, to giving a judgment of it and condemning it; he gave a scientific explanation of it, reducing that existing system, which differs in the different European and non-European countries, to a common basis—the capitalist form of society, the laws of the functioning and development of which he subjected to an objective analysis (he showed the *necessity* of exploitation under such a system). In just the same way, he did not find it possible to rest content with asserting that only the socialist system harmonizes with human nature, as was claimed by the great utopian Socialists and by their wretched epigones, the subjective sociologists. By this same *objective* analysis of the capitalist system, he proved the *necessity* of its transformation into the socialist system. (Precisely how he proved this and how Mr. Mikhailovsky objected to it is a question

we shall still have to revert to.) That is the source of those references to necessity which we may frequently meet with among Marxists. The distortion which Mr. Mikhailovsky introduced into the question is obvious: he dropped the whole factual content of the theory, its whole essence, and presented the matter as though the whole theory were contained in the one word "necessity" ("one cannot refer to it alone in complex practical affairs"), as though the *proof* of this theory consists in the fact that historical necessity so demands it. In other words, saying nothing about the content of the doctrine, he seized on its label only, and again started to make fun of that "simple flat disk" into which he himself had tried so hard to transform Marx's teaching. We shall not, of course, endeavour to examine his antics, because we are already sufficiently acquainted with that sort of thing. Let him cut capers for the amusement and satisfaction of Mr. Burenin (who not without good reason patted Mr. Mikhailovsky on the back in the *Novoye Vremya*),[16] let him, after paying his respects to Marx, yelp at him from round the corner: "his controversy with the utopians and idealists is one-sided as it is," that is, without the Marxists repeating its arguments. We cannot call such sallies anything else but yelping, because he literally does not bring *a single* factual, definite and verifiable objection against this controversy, so that, willing as we might be to discuss the subject—because we consider this controversy extremely important for the settlement of Russian socialist questions—we simply cannot reply to yelping, and can only shrug our shoulders and say:

"The lapdog must be strong indeed if at the elephant he barks!"

Not without interest is the next thing Mr. Mikhailovsky has to say about historical necessity, because it reveals, if only partially, the real ideological stock-in-trade of "our well-known sociologist" (the epithet which Mr. Mikhailovsky, equally with Mr. V.V., enjoys among the liberal members of our "cultured society"). He speaks of "the conflict between the idea of historical necessity and the importance of individual activity": socially active figures err in regarding themselves as active figures, when as a matter of fact they are "activated," "marionettes, manipulated from a mysterious underground by the immanent laws of historical necessity"—such, he claims, is the conclusion to be drawn from this idea, which he therefore characterizes as "sterile" and "diffuse." Probably not every reader knows where Mr. Mikhailovsky got all this nonsense about marionettes and the like. The fact is that this is one of the favourite hobbyhorses of the subjective philosopher—the idea of the conflict between determinism and morality, between historical necessity and the importance of the individual. He has filled reams of paper on the subject and has uttered an infinite amount of sentimental, philistine nonsense in order to settle this conflict in favour of morality and the importance of the individual. As a matter of fact, there is no conflict here at all; it has been invented by Mr. Mikhailovsky, who feared (not without reason) that determinism would cut the ground from under the philistine morality he loves so dearly. The idea of determinism, which

establishes the necessity of human acts and rejects the absurd fable about free will, in no way destroys man's reason or conscience, or judgment of his actions. Quite the contrary, the determinist view alone makes a strict and correct judgment possible, instead of attributing everything one fancies to free will. Similarly, the idea of historical necessity in no way undermines the role of the individual in history: all history is made up of the actions of individuals, who are undoubtedly active figures. The real question that arises in judging the social activity of an individual is: what conditions ensure the success of the activity, what guarantee is there that this activity will not remain an isolated act lost in a welter of contrary acts? This also involves the question, which is answered differently by Social-Democrats and by the other Russian Socialists, namely, in what way must activity which aims at bringing about the socialist system enlist the masses in order to secure real results? Obviously, the answer to this question depends directly and immediately on the conception of the grouping of social forces in Russia, of the class struggle which forms the substance of Russian actualities; and here too Mr. Mikhailovsky dances around the question without even attempting to state it precisely and to furnish an answer to it. The Social-Democratic answer to the question, as we know, is based on the view that the Russian economic system is a bourgeois society, from which there can be only one way out, one that necessarily follows from the very nature of the bourgeois system, namely, the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. It is obvious that criticism that is serious

ought to be directed either against the view that our system is a bourgeois system or against the conception of the nature of this system and the laws of its development; but Mr. Mikhailovsky does not even think of dealing with serious questions. He prefers to make shift with meaningless phrasemongering about necessity being too general a parenthesis, and the like. Yes, Mr. Mikhailovsky, any idea will be too general a parenthesis if you first take all the insides out of it, as though it were a dried herring, and then begin to play about with the skin! This outer skin, which covers really serious and burning questions of the day, is Mr. Mikhailovsky's favourite sphere; for instance, with particular pride he emphasizes that "economic materialism ignores or throws a wrong light on the question of heroes and the crowd." Don't you see, the question as to the struggle of which classes forms the substance of modern Russian actualities, and on which basis it is formed, is probably too general for Mr. Mikhailovsky, and he evades it. On the other hand, the question—what relations exist between the hero and the crowd?—irrespective of whether it is a crowd of workers, peasants, factory owners, or landlords, is one that interests him extremely. These questions may be really "interesting," but anybody who rebukes the materialists for directing all their efforts to the settlement of questions which directly concern the liberation of the labouring class is an admirer of philistine science and nothing more. Concluding his "criticism" (?) of materialism, Mr. Mikhailovsky makes one more attempt to misrepresent the facts and performs one more manipulation.

Having expressed doubt as to the correctness of Engels' opinion that *Capital* was hushed up by the official economists[17] (a doubt he justifies on the curious grounds that there are numerous universities in Germany!), Mr. Mikhailovsky says: "Marx did not have this particular circle of readers" (workers) "in view, but expected something from men of science too." That is absolutely untrue. Marx understood very well how little impartiality and scientific criticism he could expect from the bourgeois scientists, and in the Preface to the second edition of *Capital* he expressed himself very positively on this score. He there says: "The understanding which *Capital* rapidly met with among wide circles of the German working class is the best reward for my labour. Herr Meyer . . . a man who on economic questions adheres to the bourgeois standpoint, aptly stated in a pamphlet which appeared during the Franco-Prussian War that the great capacity for theoretical thinking (der grosse theoretische Sinn) which was regarded as the heritage of the Germans has completely disappeared among the so-called educated classes of Germany, but, on the other hand, is being born anew in her working class."

The subterfuge again concerns materialism and is entirely in the style of the first sample. "The theory" (of materialism) "has never been scientifically proved and verified." Such is the thesis. Here is the proof: "Individual good pages of historical content in Engels, Kautsky and certain others also (as in the esteemed work of Blos) might well dispense with the label economic materialism, since," (note the "since"!) "in fact" (*sic*!), "they take the sum

total of social life into account, even though the economic strings predominate in the chord." And the conclusion—"Economic materialism has not justified itself in science."

A familiar trick! To prove that the theory lacks foundation, Mr. Mikhailovsky first distorts it by ascribing to it the absurd intention of not taking the sum total of social life into account, whereas quite the opposite is the case: the materialists (Marxists) were the first Socialists to insist on the need of analyzing all aspects of social life, and not only the economic*—then he declares that "in fact" the

* This has been quite clearly expressed in *Capital* and in the tactics of the Social-Democrats, as compared with the earlier Socialists. Marx directly demanded that we should not confine ourselves to the economic aspect. In 1843, when drafting the program for a projected magazine, Marx wrote to Ruge: "The whole socialist principle is again only one aspect. . . . We, on our part, must devote equal attention to the other aspect, the theoretical existence of man, and consequently must make religion, science, and so forth an object of our criticism. . . . Just as *religion* represents a table of contents of the theoretical conflicts of mankind, the *political state* represents a table of contents of its practical conflicts. Thus, the political state, within the limits of its form, expresses sub specie rei publicae (from the political standpoint) all social conflicts, needs and interests. Hence to make a most special political question—e.g., the difference between the estate system and the representative system—an object of criticism by no means implies descending from the hauteur des principes (the height of principles—*Tr.*) since this question expresses in *political* language the difference between the rule of man and the rule of private property. This means that the critic not only may but must deal with these political questions (which the inveterate Socialist considers unworthy of attention)."[18]

materialists have "effectively" explained the sum total of social life by economics (a fact which obviously demolishes the author)—and finally he comes to the conclusion that materialism "has not justified itself!" Your subterfuges, however, Mr. Mikhailovsky, have justified themselves magnificently!

And this is all that Mr. Mikhailovsky brings forward in "refutation" of materialism. I repeat, there is no criticism here, it is nothing but vapid and pretentious verbosity. If we were to ask any person what objections Mr. Mikhailovsky has brought against the view that the relations of production form the basis of all others, how he has disproved the concept forms of society and of the development of these forms as a process of natural history, the concept which Marx worked out with the help of the materialist method, how he has proved the fallacy of the materialist explanations of various historical questions given, for instance, by the writers he has mentioned—that person would have to answer that Mikhailovsky has brought no objections, has in no way disproved, and has pointed out no fallacies. He has merely beat about the bush, trying to confuse the essence of the matter by phrasemongering, and in passing he invented various piffling subterfuges.

It is hard to expect anything serious of such a critic when he continues to refute Marxism in No. 2 of the *Russkoye Bogatstvo*. The only difference is that he has already exhausted his own power of inventing subterfuges and begins to avail himself of those of others.

He starts out by declaiming about the "complexity" of social life: why, even galvanism is connect-

ed with economic materialism, because Galvani's experiments "produced an impression" also on Hegel. Wonderful wit! One could just as easily connect Mr. Mikhailovsky with the Emperor of China! What are we to deduce from this—apart from the fact that there are people who find pleasure in talking nonsense?

"The essence of the historical course of things," Mr. Mikhailovsky continues, "which is elusive in general, has also eluded the doctrine of economic materialism, although the latter apparently rests on two pillars: the discovery of the all-determining significance of the forms of production and exchange and the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process."

And so, the materialists rest their case on the "unimpeachableness" of the dialectical process! In other words, they base their sociological theories on Hegelian triads. Here we have the stereotyped charge of Hegelian dialectics levelled against Marxism, a charge which one thought had already been worn sufficiently threadbare by Marx's bourgeois critics. Unable to bring anything against the doctrine itself, these gentlemen fastened on Marx's mode of expression and attacked the origin of the theory, thinking thereby to undermine the theory itself. And Mr. Mikhailovsky makes no bones about resorting to similar methods. He uses a chapter from Engels' *Anti-Dühring* as a pretext. Replying to Dühring, who attacked Marx's dialectics, Engels says that Marx never even thought of "proving" anything by means of Hegelian triads, that Marx only studied and investigated the real process, and that he re-

garded the conformity of a theory to reality as its only criterion. If, however, it sometimes transpired that the development of any particular social phenomenon conformed with the Hegelian scheme, namely, thesis—negation—negation of the negation, that is not at all surprising, for it is no rare thing in nature generally. And Engels proceeds to cite examples from the field of natural history (the development of a seed) and from the social field—as, for instance, that first there was primitive communism, then private property, and then the capitalist socialization of labour; or that first there was primitive materialism, then idealism, and then scientific materialism, and so forth. It is clear to everybody that the main burden of Engels' argument is that materialists must correctly and accurately depict the actual historical process, and that insistence on dialectics, the selection of examples to demonstrate the correctness of the triad, is nothing but a relic of the Hegelianism out of which scientific Socialism has grown, a relic of its mode of expression. And, indeed, once it has been categorically declared that to attempt to "prove" anything by triads is absurd, and that nobody even thought of doing so, what significance can examples of "dialectical" processes have? Is it not obvious that they merely point to the origin of the doctrine, and nothing more? Mr. Mikhailovsky himself feels this when he says that the theory should not be blamed for its origin. But in order to discern in Engels' arguments something more than the origin of the theory, it would obviously be necessary to prove that the materialists had settled at least one historical *problem* by

means of triads, and not on the basis of the pertinent facts. Did Mr. Mikhailovsky attempt to prove this? Not a bit of it. On the contrary, he was himself obliged to admit that "Marx filled the empty dialectical scheme so full with factual content that it could be removed from this content like a lid from a bowl without anything being changed" (as to the exception which Mr. Mikhailovsky makes here—regarding the future—we shall deal with it anon). If that is so, why is Mr. Mikhailovsky so zealously fussing around with this lid that changes nothing? Why does he say that the materialists "rest" their case on the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process? Why, when he is combating this lid, does he declare that he is combating one of the "pillars" of scientific Socialism, which is a downright untruth?

I shall not, of course, examine how Mr. Mikhailovsky analyzes the examples of triads, because, I repeat, this has no connection whatever either with scientific materialism or with Russian Marxism. But the interesting question arises: what grounds had Mr. Mikhailovsky for so distorting the attitude of Marxists to dialectics? Two grounds: first, Mr. Mikhailovsky heard the sound of a bell, but where it came from he could not tell; second, Mr. Mikhailovsky performed another subterfuge (or, rather, borrowed it from Dühring).

Ad 1*): when reading Marxist literature Mr. Mikhailovsky constantly came across references to "the dialectical method" in social science, "dialectical thinking," again in the sphere of social prob-

* As to the first point.—*Ed.*

lems (which alone is in question), and so forth. In his simplicity of heart (it were well if it were only simplicity) he took it for granted that this method consists in solving all sociological problems in accordance with the laws of the Hegelian triad. Had he been just a little more attentive to the matter in hand he could not but have become convinced of the absurdity of this notion. What Marx and Engels called the dialectical method—in contradistinction to the metaphysical method—is nothing more nor less than the scientific method in sociology, which consists in regarding society as a living organism in a state of constant development (and not as something mechanically concatenated and therefore allowing any arbitrary combination of separate social elements), the study of which organism requires an objective analysis of the relations of production that constitute the given form of society and an investigation of its laws of functioning and development. We shall endeavour below to illustrate the relation between the dialectical method and the metaphysical method (to which concept the subjective method in sociology undoubtedly also belongs) by Mr. Mikhailovsky's own arguments. For the present we shall only observe that anyone who reads the definition and description of the dialectical method given either by Engels (in the polemic against Dühring: *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*) or by Marx (various comments in *Capital*, in the Preface to the second edition, and in *The Poverty of Philosophy*)[19] will see that the Hegelian triads are not even mentioned, and that it all amounts to regarding social evolution as the development of social-

economic formations as a process of natural history. In confirmation of this I shall cite in extenso the description of the dialectical method given in the *Vestnik Evropy*,[20] 1872, No. 5 (in the comment "The Standpoint of Karl Marx's Critique of Political Economy"),[21] which Marx quotes in the Preface to the second edition of *Capital*. Marx says that the method he employed in *Capital* had been little understood, "German reviews, of course, shriek out at Hegelian sophistics." And in order to illustrate his method more clearly, Marx quotes the description of it given in the comment mentioned. The one thing which is of moment to Marx, it is there stated, is to find the law of the phenomena with whose investigation he is concerned. Of still greater moment to him is the law of their variation, of their development, of their transition from one form into another, from one series of social relations into a different one. Consequently, Marx only troubles himself about one thing: to show, by rigid scientific investigation, the necessity of the given series of social relations, and to establish, as fully as possible, the facts that serve him as fundamental starting points. For this it is quite enough if he proves, at the same time, both the necessity of the present order of things, and the necessity of another order into which the first must inevitably pass over, and this is all the same whether men believe or do not believe in it, whether they are conscious or unconscious of it. Marx treats the social movement as a process of natural history, governed by laws not only independent of human will, consciousness and intentions, but rather, on the contrary, determining

the will, consciousness and intentions of men. (To be noted by Messrs. the subjectivists, who separate social evolution from the evolution of natural history because man sets himself conscious "aims" and is guided by definite ideals.) If in the history of civilization the conscious element plays a part so subordinate, then it is self-evident that a critical inquiry whose subject matter is civilization, can, less than anything else, have for its basis any form of, or any result of, consciousness. That is to say, that not the idea, but the external, objective phenomenon alone can serve as its starting point. Such an inquiry will confine itself to the confrontation and the comparison of a fact, not with ideas, but with another fact. For this inquiry, the one thing of moment is, that both facts be investigated as accurately as possible, and that they actually form, each with respect to the other, different moments of an evolution; but most important of all is that an equally accurate investigation be made of the whole series of successions, of the sequences and concatenations in which the different stages of such an evolution present themselves. Marx directly denies that the general laws of economic life are one and the same, no matter whether they are applied to the present or the past. On the contrary, every historical period has its own laws. Economic life offers us a phenomenon analogous to the history of evolution in other branches of biology. The old economists misunderstood the nature of economic laws when they likened them to the laws of physics and chemistry. A more thorough analysis shows that social organisms differ among themselves as fun-

damentally as plants or animals. Setting himself the task of following and explaining from this point of view the capitalist economic system, Marx thereby formulates, in a strictly scientific manner, the aim that every accurate investigation into economic life must have. The scientific value of such an inquiry lies in disclosing the special (historical) laws that regulate the origin, existence, development, and death of a given social organism and its replacement by another and higher one.

Such is the description of the dialectical method which Marx fished out of the bottomless pit of magazine and newspaper comments on *Capital*, and which he translated into German, because this description of the method, as he himself says, is entirely correct. One asks, is there any mention here, even a single word, about triads, trichotomies, the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process and suchlike nonsense, at which Mr. Mikhailovsky tilts in so knightly a fashion? And after giving this description, Marx plainly says that his method is the "direct opposite" of Hegel's method. According to Hegel the development of the idea, in conformity with the dialectical laws of the triad, determines the development of the real world. And it is of course only in that case that one could speak of the importance of the triads and of the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process. "With me, on the contrary," Marx says, "the ideal is nothing but the reflection of the material." And the whole matter thus amounts to an "affirmative recognition of the existing state of things and of its inevitable development." No other role remains for the triads than as a lid and a skin

("I coquetted with the modes of expression peculiar to Hegel," Marx says in this same Preface), in which only philistines could be interested. How, one asks, should we judge a man who set out to criticize one of the "pillars" of scientific materialism, i.e., dialectics, and began to speak of anything you like, even of frogs and Napoleon, except of what dialectics is, of whether the development of society is really a process of natural history, whether the materialist conception of social-economic formations as special social organisms is correct, whether the methods of objective analysis of these formations are right, whether social ideas really do not determine social development but are themselves determined by it, and so forth? Can one assume only a lack of understanding in this case?

Ad 2*): after such a "criticism" of dialectics, Mr. Mikhailovsky attributes to Marx these methods of proof "by means of" Hegelian triads, and, of course, victoriously combats them. "Regarding the future," he says, "the immanent laws of society are based purely on dialectics." (This is the exception referred to above.) Marx's arguments on the inevitability of the expropriation of the expropriators by virtue of the laws of development of capitalism are "purely dialectical." Marx's "ideal" of the common ownership of land and capital "in the sense of its inevitability and unimpeachableness rests entirely on the end of a Hegelian three-term chain."

This argument is *taken in its entirety* from Dühring, who adduces it in his *Kritische Geschichte der*

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* As to the second point.—*Ed.*

Nationalöekonomie und des Sozialismus (3. Aufl., 1879, S. 486-87).* But Mr. Mikhailovsky says not a word about Dühring. Perhaps the idea of garbling Marx in this way occurred to him independently?

Engels gave a splendid reply to Dühring, and since he also quotes Dühring's criticism we shall confine ourselves to Engels' reply.[22] The reader will see that it fits Mr. Mikhailovsky perfectly.

" 'This historical sketch (of the genesis of the so-called primitive accumulation of capital in England) is relatively the best part of Marx's book,'" says Dühring, " 'and would be even better if it had not relied on dialectical crutches to help out its scholarly basis. The Hegelian negation of the negation, in default of anything better and clearer, has in fact to serve here as the midwife to deliver the future from the womb of the past. The abolition of individual property, which since the sixteenth century has been effected in the way indicated is the first negation. It will be followed by a second, which bears the character of a negation of the negation, hence the restoration of "individual property," but in a higher form, based on common ownership of the land and of the instruments of labour. Herr Marx also calls this new "individual property"—"common property," and in this we have the Hegelian higher unity, in which the contradiction is sublated' " (aufgehoben—a specific Hegelian term), " 'that is to say, in the Hegelian verbal jugglery, it is both overcome and preserved.

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* *A Critical History of National Economy and Socialism* (3rd edition, 1879, pp. 486-87).—*Tr.*

"'. . . According to this, the expropriation of the expropriators is as it were the automatic result of historical reality in its material, external relations. . . . It would be difficult to convince a sensible man of the necessity of the common ownership of land and capital, on the basis of Hegelian word-juggling such as the negation of the negation. . . . The nebulous hybrids of Marx's conceptions will however surprise no one who realizes what can be built up with the Hegelian dialectics as the scientific basis, or rather what absurdities necessarily spring from it. For the benefit of the reader who is not familiar with these artifices, it must be pointed out that Hegel's first negation is the idea of the fall from grace, which is taken from the catechism, and his second is the idea of a higher unity leading to redemption. The logic of facts can hardly be based on this nonsensical analogy borrowed from the religious sphere. . . . Herr Marx remains cheerfully in the nebulous world of his property which is at the same time both individual and common and leaves it to his adepts to solve for themselves this profound dialectical enigma.' Thus far Herr Dühring.

"So," Engels concludes, "Marx has no other way of proving the necessity of the social revolution and the establishment of a social system based on the common ownership of land and of the means of production produced by labour, except by using the Hegelian negation of the negation; and because he bases his socialist theory on these nonsensical analogies borrowed from religion, he arrives at the result that in the society of the future there will be property which is at the same time both individual and com-

mon, as the Hegelian higher unity of the sublated contradiction.*

"Let us for the moment leave the negation of the negation to look after itself, and let us have a look at the 'property which is at the same time both individual and common.' Herr Dühring characterizes this as a 'nebulous world,' and curiously enough he is really right on this point. Unfortunately, however, it is not Marx but on the contrary Herr Dühring himself who is in this nebulous world. . . . He can put Marx right à la Hegel, by foisting on him the higher unity of property, of which there is not a word in Marx.

"Marx says: 'It is the negation of negation. This does not re-establish private property for the producer,

* That this formulation of Dühring's views perfectly fits Mr. Mikhailovsky too is proved by the following passage in his article "Karl Marx Before the Tribunal of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky." Objecting to Mr. Zhukovsky's assertion that Marx is a defender of private property, Mr. Mikhailovsky refers to this scheme of Marx's and explains it in the following manner. "In his scheme Marx performed two well-known tricks of the Hegelian dialectics: firstly, the scheme is constructed in accordance with the laws of the Hegelian triad; secondly, the synthesis is based on the identity of opposites—individual and common property. This means that the word 'individual' here has the specific, purely arbitrary meaning of a term of the dialectical process, and absolutely nothing can be based on it." This was said by a man of the most estimable intentions, defending, in the eyes of the Russian public, the "sanguine" Marx from the bourgeois Mr. Zhukovsky. And with these estimable intentions he explains Marx as basing his conception of the process on "tricks"! Mr. Mikhailovsky may draw from this the, for him, not unprofitable moral that estimable intentions alone are never quite enough.

but gives him individual property based on the acquisitions of the capitalist era; i.e., on cooperation of free labourers and the possession in common of the land and of the means of production. The transformation of scattered private property, arising from individual labour, into capitalist private property is, naturally, a process, incomparably more protracted, violent, and difficult, than the transformation of capitalistic private property, already practically resting on socialized production, into socialized property.' That is all. The state of things brought about through the expropriation of the expropriators is therefore characterized as the re-establishment of individual property, but *on the basis* of the common ownership of the land and of the means of production produced by labour itself. To anyone who understands German" (and Russian too, Mr. Mikhailovsky, because the translation is absolutely correct) "this means that common ownership extends to the land and the other means of production, and private ownership to the products, that is, the articles of consumption. And in order to make this comprehensible even to children of six, Marx assumes on page 56" (Russ. ed., p. 30) "'a community of free individuals, carrying on their work with the means of production in common, in which the labour power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labour power of the community,' that is, a society organized on a socialist basis; and he says: 'The total product of our community is a social product. One portion serves as fresh means of production and remains social.' But another portion is consumed by the members as means of subsistence. 'A distribution

of this portion among them is consequently necessary.' And surely that is clear enough even for Herr Dühring. . . .

"The property which is at the same time both private and common, this confused hybrid, this absurdity which necessarily springs from Hegelian dialectics, this nebulous world, this profound dialectical enigma, which Marx leaves his adepts to solve for themselves—is yet another free creation and imagination on the part of Herr Dühring. . . .

"But what role," Engels continues, "does the negation of the negation play in Marx? On page 791 and the following pages" (Russ. ed., p. 648 et seq.) "he sets out the conclusions which he draws from the preceding fifty" (Russ. ed. thirty-five) "pages of economic and historical investigation into the so-called primitive accumulation of capital. Before the capitalist era, at least in England, petty industry existed on the basis of the private property of the labourer in his means of production. The so-called primitive accumulation of capital consisted in this case in the expropriation of these immediate producers, that is, in the dissolution of private property based on the labour of its owner. This became possible because the petty industry referred to above is compatible only with a system of production, and a society, moving within narrow and primitive bounds, and at a certain stage of its development it brings forth the material agencies for its own annihilation. This annihilation, the transformation of the individual and scattered means of production into socially concentrated ones, forms the prehistory of capital. As soon as the labourers are turned into

proletarians and their means of labour into capital, as soon as the capitalist mode of production stands on its own feet, the further socialization of labour and further transformation of the land and other means of production" (into capital), "and therefore the further expropriation of private proprietors, takes a new form. 'That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the labourer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many labourers. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the concentration of capital. One capitalist always kills many. Hand in hand with this concentration, or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, develop, on an ever extending scale, the cooperative form of the labour process, the conscious technical application of science, the methodical cultivation of the soil, the transformation of the instruments of labour into instruments of labour only usable in common, the economizing of all means of production by their use as the means of production of combined, socialized labour. Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolize all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. Capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Concentration of the means of production and socialization of

labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated.'

"And now I ask the reader: where are the dialectical frills and mazes and intellectual arabesques; where the mixed and misconceived ideas as a result of which everything is all one in the end; where the dialectical miracles for his faithful followers; where the mysterious dialectical rubbish and the contortions based on the Hegelian Logos doctrine, without which Marx, according to Herr Dühring, is unable to accomplish his development? Marx merely shows from history, and in this passage states in a summarized form, that just as the former petty industry necessarily, through its own development, created the conditions of its annihilation . . . so now the capitalist mode of production has likewise itself created the material conditions which will annihilate it. The process is a historical one, and if it is at the same time a dialectical process, this is not Marx's fault, however annoying it may be for Herr Dühring.

"It is only at this point, after Marx has completed his proof on the basis of historical and economic facts, that he proceeds: 'The capitalist mode of production and appropriation, and hence capitalist private property, is the first negation of individual private property founded on the labours of the proprietor. But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a law of Nature, its own negation. It is the negation of the negation'—and so on (as quoted above).

"In characterizing the process as the negation of the negation, therefore, Marx does not dream of attempting to prove by this that the process was historically necessary. On the contrary: after he has proved from history that in fact the process has partially already occurred, and partially must occur in the future, he then also characterizes it as a process which develops in accordance with a definite dialectical law. That is all. It is therefore once again a pure distortion of the facts by Herr Dühring, when he declares that the negation of the negation has to serve here as the midwife to deliver the future from the womb of the past, or that Marx wants anybody to convince himself of the necessity of the common ownership of land and capital . . . on the basis of the negation of the negation." (P. 125.)

The reader will see that the whole of Engels' splendid rebuttal of Dühring given here applies in all respects to Mr. Mikhailovsky, who also asserts that with Marx the future rests exclusively on the end of a Hegelian chain and that the conviction of its inevitability can be founded only on faith.*

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* It would not be superfluous, I think, to note in this connection that this entire explanation is contained in that same chapter in which Engels discusses the seed, the teaching of Rousseau, and other examples of the dialectical process. One would have thought that a mere comparison of these examples with the clear and categorical statements of Engels (and of Marx, to whom the manuscript was read) to the effect that there can be no question of *proving* anything by triads or of inserting in the depiction of the real process the "conditional terms" of these triads should be quite sufficient to make clear the absurdity of accusing Marxism of Hegelian dialectics.

The whole difference between Dühring and Mr. Mikhailovsky reduces itself to the following two small points: Firstly, Dühring, despite the fact that he cannot speak of Marx without foaming at the mouth, nevertheless considered it necessary to mention in the next section of his *History* that Marx in the Preface categorically repudiated the accusation of being a Hegelian, whereas Mr. Mikhailovsky remains silent as to the (above quoted) absolutely definite and clear statements by Marx of what he conceives the dialectical method to be.

Secondly, another peculiarity of Mr. Mikhailovsky's is that he concentrated all his attention on the use of tenses. Why, when he speaks of the future, does Marx use the present tense?—our philosopher demands with an air of triumph. The answer to this you will find in any grammar, most worthy critic: you will find that the present tense is used in the future when the future is regarded as inevitable and unquestionable. But why so, why is it unquestionable—Mr. Mikhailovsky anxiously asks, desiring to convey such profound agitation as would justify even a distortion. But on this point, too, Marx gave an absolutely definite reply. You may consider it inadequate or wrong, but in that case you must show *how exactly* and *why exactly* it is wrong, and not talk nonsense about Hegelianism.

Time was when Mr. Mikhailovsky not only knew himself what this reply was, but lectured others on it. Mr. Zhukovsky, he wrote in 1877, might with good grounds regard Marx's construction concerning the future as conjectural, but "he had no moral right" to ignore the question of the socialization of

labour, "to which Marx attributes vast importance." Well, of course! Zhukovsky in 1877 had no moral right to ignore the question, but Mr. Mikhailovsky in 1894 has this moral right. Perhaps, quod licet Jovi, non licet bovi?!*

At this point I cannot help recalling an amusing conception of this socialization that was once expressed in the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski.*[23] In No. 7, 1883, this magazine published a "Letter to the Editor" from a certain Mr. Postoronny[24] who, like Mr. Mikhailovsky, regarded Marx's "construction" about the future as conjectural. "Essentially," this gentleman argues, "the social form of labour under capitalism amounts to this, that several hundreds or thousands of workers grind, hammer, turn, lay on, lay under, pull and perform numerous other operations under one roof. As to the general character of this regime it is excellently expressed by the proverb: 'Each for himself, and God for all.' What is there social about this form of labour?"

Well, you can see at once that the man has grasped what it is all about! "The social form of labour . . . amounts to . . . working under one roof"!! And when such preposterous ideas are expressed in one of the, so far, best Russian magazines, they want to assure us that the theoretical part of *Capital* is generally recognized by science. Yes, as it was unable to adduce any objection to *Capital* of any serious weight, "generally recognized science" began to bow and scrape before it, at the same time continuing to betray the most elementary ignorance and to

* What Jove may do, the bull may not.—*Tr.*

repeat the old banalities of school economics. We must dwell on this question somewhat in order to make clear to Mr. Mikhailovsky the real meaning of the matter, which, according to his constant habit, he has entirely ignored.

The socialization of labour by capitalist production does not consist in the fact that people work under one roof (that is only a small part of the process), but in the fact that concentration of capital is accompanied by the specialization of social labour, by a reduction in the number of capitalists in any given branch of industry and an increase in the number of special branches of industry—in the fact that many scattered processes of production are merged into one social process of production. When, in the days of handicraft weaving, for example, the small producers themselves spun the yarn and made it into cloth, we had only a few branches of industry (spinning and weaving were merged). But when production becomes socialized by capitalism, the number of special branches of industry increases: cotton spinning and cotton weaving are separated; this division and concentration of production in their turn give rise to new branches—machine building, coal mining, and so forth. In each branch of industry, which has now become more specialized, the number of capitalists steadily decreases. This means that the social tie between the producers becomes increasingly stronger, the producers become welded into a single whole. The isolated small producers each performed several operations at one time, and were therefore relatively independent of each other: when, for instance, the handicraftsman

himself sowed flax, and himself spun and wove, he was almost independent of others. It was this (and only this) regime of small, disunited commodity producers that justified the proverb: "Each for himself, and God for all," that is, the anarchy of market fluctuations. But the case is entirely different under the socialization of labour achieved by capitalism. The manufacturer who produces fabrics depends on the cotton yarn manufacturer; the latter depends on the capitalist planter who grows the cotton, on the owner of the machine-building works, the coal mine, and so on and so forth. The result is that no capitalist can get along without others. It is clear that the proverb "each for himself" is quite inapplicable to such a regime: here each works for all and all for each (and no room is left for God—either as a super mundane fantasy or as a mundane "golden calf"). The character of the regime completely changes. When, during the regime of small, isolated enterprises, work came to a standstill in any one of them, this affected only a small number of members of society, it did not cause any general disturbance, and therefore did not attract general attention and did not provoke public interference. But when work comes to a standstill in a large enterprise, which is engaged in a highly specialized branch of industry and is therefore working almost for the whole of society and which, in its turn, is dependent on the whole of society (for the sake of simplicity I take a case where socialization has attained the culminating point), work is bound to come to a standstill in all the other enterprises of society, because they can obtain the products they need only from this enter-

prise and can dispose of all their commodities only provided the commodities of this enterprise are available. The whole of production thus becomes fused into a single social process of production; yet each enterprise is conducted by a separate capitalist, is dependent on his will and pleasure and turns over the social products to him as his private property. Is it not clear that the form of production comes into irreconcilable contradiction with the form of appropriation? Is it not evident that the latter is bound to adapt itself to the former and is also bound to become social, that is, socialist? But the smart philistine of the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* reduces the whole thing to the performance of work under one roof. Could anything be wider of the mark! (I have described only the material process, only the change in the relations of production, without touching on the social aspect of the process, the fact that the workers become united, welded together and organized, since that is a derivative and subsidiary phenomenon.)

The reason why such elementary things have to be explained to the Russian "democrats" is that they are immersed to their very ears in petty-bourgeois ideas and are positively unable to imagine any but a petty-bourgeois order of things.

But let us return to Mr. Mikhailovsky. What objections did he level against the facts and considerations on which Marx based the conclusion that the socialist system is inevitable by virtue of the very laws of development of capitalism? Did he show that in reality—under a commodity organization of social economy—there is no growing specializa-

tion of the social labour process, no concentration of capital and enterprises, no socialization of the whole labour process? No, he did not advance a single argument in refutation of these facts. Did he shake the proposition that anarchy, which is irreconcilable with the socialization of labour, is an inherent feature of capitalist society? He said nothing about this. Did he prove that the amalgamation of the labour processes of all the capitalists into a single social labour process is compatible with private property, or that some other solution to the contradiction other than that indicated by Marx is possible or conceivable? No, he did not say a single word about this.

On what then does his criticism rest? On subterfuges and distortions and on a spate of words which are nothing but the noise of a rattle.

Indeed, how else are we to characterize such methods as are employed by a critic who, having first talked a lot of nonsense about triple successive steps of history, demands of Marx with a serious air: "And what next?"—that is, how will history proceed beyond that final stage of the process which he has described? Please note that from the very outset of his literary and revolutionary activities Marx most definitely demanded that sociological theory should accurately depict the real process—and nothing more (see, for instance, the *Communist Manifesto* on the Communists' criterion of theory).[25] He strictly adhered to this demand in his *Capital*: he made it his task to give a scientific analysis of the capitalist form of society—and there he stopped, having shown that the development of this organiza-

tion actually going on before our eyes has such and such a tendency, that it must inevitably perish and become transformed into another, a higher organization. But Mr. Mikhailovsky, evading the whole substance of Marx's doctrine, puts his stupid question: "And what next?" And he adds with an air of profundity: "I must frankly confess that I cannot quite conceive what Engels would reply." But we must frankly confess, Mr. Mikhailovsky, that we can quite conceive the spirit and methods of such "criticism"!

Or take the following argument: "In the Middle Ages, Marx's individual property based on the proprietor's own labour was neither the only nor the predominating factor, even in the realm of economic relations. There was much more alongside of it, to which, however, the dialectical method in Marx's interpretation" (and not in Mr. Mikhailovsky's garbled version of it?) "does not propose to return. . . . It is evident that all these schemes do not present a picture of historical reality, or even of its proportions; they simply satisfy the tendency of the human mind to think of every object in its past, present and future states." Even your methods of garbling, Mr. Mikhailovsky, are stereotyped to the point of nausea. First he insinuates into Marx's scheme, which claims to formulate the actual process of development of capitalism,* and nothing else, the intention

* Other features of the economic system of the Middle Ages are omitted for the very reason that they belonged to the feudal form of society, whereas Marx investigates only the *capitalist* form. In its pure form the process of development of capitalism actually did begin—for instance,

of proving everything by triads, then he declares that Marx's scheme does not conform to this plan which Mr. Mikhailovsky himself has foisted upon it (the third stage restores only *one* aspect of the first stage, omitting all the others), and then in the most blatant manner draws the conclusion that "the scheme evidently does not present a picture of historical reality"!

Is any serious controversy thinkable with such a man who (as Engels said of Dühring) is incapable of quoting accurately even by way of exception? Can there be any arguing, when the public is assured that the scheme "evidently" does not conform to reality, while not even an attempt is made to show that it is in any way fallacious?

Instead of criticizing the real content of Marx's views, Mr. Mikhailovsky exercises his ingenuity on the subject of the categories past, present and future. Arguing against the "eternal truths" of Herr Dühring, Engels, for instance, says that the "morality . . . preached to us today" is a threefold morality: Christian-feudal, bourgeois and proletarian, so that the past, present and future have their own theories of morality.[26] In this connection, Mr. Mikhailovsky reasons as follows: "I think that it is the categories past, present and future that lie as the basis of all triple divisions of history into periods." What profundity! Who does not know that if any social phenomenon is examined in its process of development, there will always be discovered in it relics of the past,

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in England—with the regime of small, isolated commodity producers and their individual labour property.

the foundations of the present and the germs of the future? But did Engels, for instance, think of asserting that the history of morality (he was speaking, we know, only of the "present") was confined to the three factors indicated, that feudal morality, for example, was not preceded by slave morality, and the latter by the morality of the primitive communist community? Instead of seriously criticizing Engels' attempt to analyze the modern trends of moral ideas by explaining them materialistically, Mr. Mikhailovsky treats us to the most empty phrasemongering!

In connection with the methods of "criticism" Mr. Mikhailovsky resorts to, criticism which begins with the statement that he does not know where, in what work, the materialist conception of history is expounded, it would perhaps not be unprofitable to recall that there was a time when the author knew one of these works and was capable of appraising it more correctly. In 1877, Mr. Mikhailovsky expressed the following opinion of *Capital*: "If we remove from *Capital* the heavy, clumsy and unnecessary lid of Hegelian dialectics," (How strange! How is it that "Hegelian dialectics" were "unnecessary" in 1877, while in 1894 it appears that materialism rests on "the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process"?) "we shall observe in it, aside from the other merits of this work, splendidly worked up material for an answer to the general question of the relation of forms to the material conditions of their existence, and an excellent formulation of this question for a definite sphere." "The relation of forms to the material conditions of their existence"—why, this is precisely that question of the interrelation of the various

aspects of social life, of the superstructure of ideological social relations resting on material relations, in the well-known answer to which the doctrine of materialism consists. Let us proceed.

"In point of fact, *the whole of 'Capital'*" (my italics) "is devoted to an inquiry into how a form of society, once arisen, continues to develop and accentuates its typical features, subjecting to itself and assimilating discoveries, inventions, improvements in methods of production, new markets and science itself, compelling them to work for it, and how, finally, a given form is unable to stand any further changes in material conditions."

An astonishing thing! In 1877, "the whole of *Capital*" was devoted to a materialist inquiry into a given form of society (what else is materialism if not an explanation of forms of society by material conditions?), whereas in 1894 it turns out that it is not even known where, in what work, an exposition of this materialism is to be sought!

In 1877, *Capital* contained an "inquiry" into how "a given form" (the capitalist form, is that not so?) "is unable to stand any further changes in material conditions" (mark that!)—whereas in 1894 it turns out that there was no inquiry at all and that the conviction that the capitalist form is unable to stand any further development of productive forces—rests "entirely on the end of a Hegelian triad"! In 1877, Mr. Mikhailovsky wrote that "the analysis of the relations of a given form of society to the material conditions of its existence will *forever*" (my italics) "remain a monument to the author's logical powers and vast erudition"—whereas in 1894 he declares

that the doctrine of materialism has never and nowhere been verified and proved scientifically!

An astonishing thing! What can this mean? What has happened?

Two things have happened. Firstly, the *Russian* peasant Socialism of the 'seventies—which "snorted" at freedom because of its bourgeois character, which fought the "clear-browed liberals" who zealously glossed over the antagonisms of Russian life, and which dreamed of a peasant revolution—has completely decayed and has begotten that vulgar, philistine liberalism which discerns an "encouraging impression" in the progressive trends of peasant husbandry, forgetting that they are accompanied (and determined) by the wholesale expropriation of the peasantry. Secondly, in 1877 Mr. Mikhailovsky was so engrossed in his task of defending the "sanguine" (i.e., revolutionary Socialist) Marx from the liberal critics that he failed to observe the incompatibility of Marx's method with his own method. But this irreconcilable antagonism between dialectical materialism and subjective sociology was explained to him—explained by Engels' articles and books, and by the Russian Social-Democrats (one often meets with very apt comments on Mr. Mikhailovsky in Plekhanov's works)—and Mr. Mikhailovsky, instead of seriously sitting down to reconsider the whole question, simply took the bit between his teeth. Instead of welcoming Marx (as he did in 1872 and 1877)[27] he now yelps at him under cover of dubious praise, and shouts and fumes against the Russian Marxists for not wanting to rest content with "defending the economically weak," with warehouses and improvements in the

countryside, with museums and artels for kustars and similar well-meaning philistine ideas of progress, and for wanting to remain "sanguine," advocates of a social revolution and to teach, guide and organize the really revolutionary elements of society.

After this brief excursion into the realm of the distant past, one may, we think, conclude this examination of Mr. Mikhailovsky's "criticism" of Marx's theory. Let us then try to review and summarize the critic's "arguments."

The doctrine he set out to demolish rests, firstly, on the materialist conception of history, and, secondly, on the dialectical method.

As to the first, the critic began by declaring that he does not know where, in what work, materialism is expounded. Not having found this exposition anywhere, he began to invent a meaning for materialism himself. In order to give an idea of the excessive claims of this materialism, he invented the story that the materialists claim to have explained the entire past, present and future of mankind—and when it subsequently transpired from a consultation of the authentic statements of the Marxists that they regard only one form of society as having been explained, the critic decided that the materialists are narrowing the scope of materialism, whereby, he asserts, they are defeating themselves. In order to give an idea of the methods by which this materialism was worked out, he invented the story that the materialists themselves confessed to the inadequacy of their knowledge for such a purpose as the working out of scientific Socialism, in spite of the fact that Marx and Engels confessed to the inadequacy of

their knowledge (1845-46) in relation to economic history in general, and in spite of the fact that they never published the work which testified to this inadequacy of knowledge. After these preludes, we were treated to the criticism itself: *Capital* was annihilated by the fact that it deals with only one period, whereas the critic wants to have all periods, and also by the fact that it does not affirm economic materialism, but simply touches upon it—arguments, evidently, so weighty and cogent as to compel the recognition that materialism had never been scientifically proved. Then the fact was brought against materialism that a man who had absolutely no connection with this doctrine, having studied prehistoric times in an entirely different country, also arrived at materialist conclusions. Further, in order to show that it was absolutely wrong to drag procreation into materialism, that this was nothing but a verbal artifice, the critic set out to prove that economic relations are a superstructure on sexual and family relations. The statements made by our weighty critic in the course of this for the edification of the materialists enriched us with the profound verity that inheritance is impossible without procreation, that a complex psychology "borders" on the products of this procreation, and that children are brought up in the spirit of their fathers. In passing, we also learnt that national ties are a continuation and generalization of gentile ties. Continuing his theoretical researches into materialism, the critic noted that the content of many of the arguments of the Marxists consists in the assertion that oppression and exploitation of the masses are "necessary"

under the bourgeois regime and that this regime must "necessarily" become transformed into a socialist regime—and thereupon he hastened to declare that necessity is too general a parenthesis (if it is not stated what exactly people consider necessary) and that therefore Marxists are mystics and metaphysicians. The critic also declared that Marx's polemic against the idealists is "one-sided," but he did not say a word about the relation of the views of these idealists to the subjective method and the relation of Marx's dialectical materialism to these views.

As to the second pillar of Marxism—the dialectical method—one push by the brave critic was enough to cast it to the ground. And the push was very well aimed: the critic wrought and laboured with incredible effort to disprove that anything can be proved by triads, hushing up the fact that the dialectical method does not consist in triads, that it in fact consists in rejecting the methods of idealism and subjectivism in sociology. Another push was specially aimed at Marx: with the help of the valorous Herr Dühring, the critic ascribed to Marx the incredible absurdity of trying to prove the necessity of the doom of capitalism by means of triads—and then victoriously combated this absurdity.

Such is the epic of the brilliant "victories" of "our well-known sociologist"! How "edifying" (Burenin) is the contemplation of these victories, is it not?

We cannot refrain at this point from touching on another circumstance, one which has no direct bearing on the criticism of Marx's doctrine, but which is extremely characteristic for an elucidation of the critic's ideals and of his conception of reality, namely,

his attitude to the working-class movement in Western Europe.

Above we quoted a statement by Mr. Mikhailovsky in which he says that materialism has not justified itself in "science" (in the science of the German "friends of the people," perhaps?); but this materialism, argues Mr. Mikhailovsky, "is really spreading very rapidly among the working class." How does Mr. Mikhailovsky explain this fact? "As to the success," he says, "which economic materialism enjoys in breadth, so to speak, its dissemination in a critically unverified form, this success is due chiefly not to science, but to the common practice which has been established by prospects in the direction of the future." What other meaning can there be in this clumsy phrase about practice "established" by prospects in the direction of the future than that materialism is spreading not because it correctly explains reality, but because it turns away from reality in the direction of prospects? And he goes on to say: "These prospects demand of the German working class which is adopting them and of those who take a warm interest in its future neither knowledge nor the effort of critical thinking. They demand only faith." In other words, the spread of materialism and scientific Socialism is due to the fact that this doctrine promises the workers a better future! But a most elementary acquaintance with the history of Socialism and of the working-class movement in the West is enough to enable one to see the utter absurdity and falsity of this explanation. Everybody knows that scientific Socialism never painted any prospects for the future

as such: it confined itself to analyzing the present bourgeois regime, to studying the trends of development of the capitalist social organization—and that is all. "We do not say to the world," Marx wrote as far back as 1843, and he fulfilled this program to the letter—"We do not say to the world: 'Cease struggling—your whole struggle is futile.' All we do is to provide it with a true slogan of the struggle. We only show the world what it is really struggling for, and realization is a thing which the world *must* acquire, whether it likes it or not."[28] Everybody knows that *Capital*, for instance—that chief and basic work in which scientific Socialism is expounded—restricts itself to the most general allusions to the future and traces only those already existing elements from which the future system is growing. Everybody knows that as regards prospects for the future incomparably more was contributed by the earlier Socialists, who described the future society in every detail, desiring to enthuse mankind with a picture of a system under which people will get along without conflict and under which their social relations will be based not on exploitation but on true principles of progress, conforming to the conditions of human nature. Nevertheless, in spite of a whole phalanx of highly talented people who expounded these ideas, and in spite of the most highly convinced Socialists, their theories stood aloof from life and their programs from the political movements of the people until large-scale machine industry drew the mass of the proletarian workers into the vortex of political life, and until the true slogan of their struggle was found. This slogan was

found by Marx, "not a utopian, but a strict and, in places, even dry scientist" (as Mr. Mikhailovsky called him in the dim and distant past—in 1872); and it was not found by means of prospects, but by a scientific analysis of the present bourgeois regime, by an elucidation of the *necessity* of exploitation under this regime, by an investigation of the laws of its development. Mr. Mikhailovsky, may, of course, assure the readers of the *Russkoye Bogatstvo* that neither knowledge nor the effort of thinking is required to understand this analysis, but we have already seen in his own case (and shall see it no less in the case of his economist collaborator)[29] such a gross lack of understanding of the elementary truths established by this analysis that such a statement, of course, can only provoke a smile. It remains an indisputable fact that the spread and development of the working-class movement are proceeding precisely where large-scale capitalist machine industry is developing, and in proportion to its development, and that the socialist doctrine is successful only when it stops arguing about social conditions that harmonize with human nature and sets to work to make a materialist analysis of contemporary social relations and to elucidate the necessity of the present regime of exploitation.

Having tried to evade the real reasons for the success of materialism among the workers by describing the attitude of this doctrine to the "prospects" in a way which is directly contrary to the truth, Mr. Mikhailovsky now begins to scoff in the most vulgar and philistine manner at the ideas and tactics of the West-European working-class movement. As we

have seen, he was unable to bring literally a single argument to bear against Marx's proofs of the inevitability of the transformation of the capitalist system into a socialist system as a result of the socialization of labour. But he jeers in the most blatant manner at "the army of proletarians" preparing to expropriate the capitalists, "whereupon all class conflict will cease and peace on earth and goodwill among men will reign." He, Mr. Mikhailovsky, knows of far simpler and surer ways of achieving Socialism than this: all that is required is that the "friends of the people" should explain in greater detail the "clear and infallible" ways of achieving "the desired economic evolution"—and then these friends of the people will most likely "be called" to solve the "practical economic problems" (see the article, "Problems of the Economic Development of Russia," by Mr. Yuzhakov, in the *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 11) and meanwhile . . . meanwhile the workers must wait, rely on the friends of the people and not undertake, with "unjustified self-assurance," an independent struggle against the exploiters. Desiring to strike a deathblow at this "unjustified self-assurance," our author expresses his fervent disgust with "this science which can almost be put in a pocket dictionary." How terrible, indeed! Science—and Social-Democratic penny pamphlets that can be put in one's pocket!! Is it not obvious how unjustifiably self-assured are the people who value science only to the extent that it teaches the exploited to wage an independent struggle for their emancipation, teaches them to keep away from all "friends of the people" who gloss over class antagonisms; the people who desire to take the whole

business upon themselves and therefore expound this science in penny publications which so shock the philistines? How different it would be if the workers placed their fate in the hands of the "friends of the people"! They would give them a real, many-tomed, university, philistine science; they would acquaint them with the details of a social organization which is in harmony with human nature, provided only . . . the workers consented to wait and did not themselves begin a struggle with such unjustified self-assurance!

Before passing to the second part of Mr. Mikhailovsky's "criticism," which this time is directed not against Marx's theory in general but against the Russian Social-Democrats in particular, we shall have to make a little digression. The fact of the matter is that just as, when criticizing Marx, Mr. Mikhailovsky not only made no attempt to give an accurate description of Marx's theory but definitely distorted it, so now he most unscrupulously garbles the ideas of the Russian Social-Democrats. The truth must be restored. This can be done most conveniently by comparing the ideas of the earlier Russian Socialists with the ideas of the Social-Democrats. I borrow an account of the former from an article by Mr. Mikhailovsky in the *Russkaya Mysl*, 1892, No. 6, in which he also spoke of Marxism (and spoke of it—be it said in reproach to him now—in a decent tone, without dealing with questions which can be treated in a censored press only in the Burenin manner, without confusing the Marxists with all

sorts of riffraff) and, as against Marxism—or, at least, if not against, then parallel with Marxism—set forth his own views. Of course, I have not the least desire to offend either Mr. Mikhailovsky, by counting him among the Socialists, or the Russian Socialists, by putting them on a par with Mr. Mikhailovsky; but I think that the *line of argument* is essentially the same in both cases, the difference being only in the degree of firmness, straightforwardness and consistency of their convictions.

Describing the ideas of the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, Mr. Mikhailovsky wrote: "We have included the ownership of the land by the tiller and of the implements of labour by the producer among the moral and political ideals." The point of departure, you see, is most well-intentioned, inspired by the best wishes. . . . "The medieval forms of labour* still existing in our country have been seriously shaken, but we saw no reason to put a complete end to them for the sake of any doctrine whatever, liberal or non-liberal."

A strange argument! For "forms of labour" of any kind can be shaken only if they are superseded by some other forms; yet we do not find our author (nor any of his like-minded friends for that matter) even attempting to analyze and explain these new ones, or to ascertain why these new forms oust the

* "By medieval forms of labour"—the author explains in another place—"are meant not only communal land ownership, handicraft industry and artel organization. These are undoubtedly all medieval forms, but to them must be added all forms of ownership of land or implements of production by the worker."

old forms. Stranger still is the second half of the tirade: "We saw no reason to put an end to these forms for the sake of any doctrine." What means do "we" (i.e., the Socialists—see the above reservation) possess of "putting an end" to forms of labour, that is, of reconstructing the existing relations of production of the members of society? Is not the idea that these relations can be remade in accordance with a doctrine really absurd? Listen to what comes next: "Our task is not to rear at all costs an 'exceptional' civilization from out of our own national depths; but neither is it to transplant to our country the Western civilization in toto, with all the contradictions that are rending it; we must take what is good from wherever we can; and whether it be our own or foreign is not a matter of principle, but of practical convenience. Surely, this is so simple, clear and comprehensible that there is nothing even to discuss." And how simple it all is, indeed! "Take" what is good from everywhere—and the hat trick is performed! From the medieval forms "take" the ownership of the means of production by the worker, and from the new (i.e., the capitalist) forms "take" liberty, equality, enlightenment and culture. And there is nothing even to discuss! Here you have the whole subjective method of sociology in a nutshell: sociology starts with a utopia—the ownership of the land by the worker—and points out the conditions for realizing the desirable, namely, "take" what is good from here and from there. This philosopher regards social relations from a purely metaphysical standpoint, as a simple mechanical aggregation of various institutions, as a simple mechanical concate-

nation of various phenomena. He plucks out one of these phenomena—the ownership of the land by the tiller in medieval forms—and thinks that it can be transplanted to all other forms, just as a brick can be transferred from one building to another. But that is not studying social relations; it is mutilating the material to be studied. In reality, there is no such thing as the ownership of the land by the tiller, existing individually and independently, as you have taken it; that was only one of the links in the relations of production of that time, which consisted in the land being divided up among large landed proprietors, landlords, and in the landlords allotting it to the peasants in order to exploit them, so that the land was, as it were, wages in kind: it provided the peasant with necessary products, in order that he might be able to produce surplus product for the landlord; it was a fund which enabled the peasant to perform his feudal service for the landlord. Why did the author not follow up this system of relations of production, instead of confining himself to plucking out one phenomenon and thus presenting it in an absolutely false light? Because the author does not know how to handle social problems: he (I repeat, I am using Mr. Mikhailovsky's arguments only as an example in order to criticize Russian Socialism *as a whole*) does not even make it his business to *explain* the "forms of labour" existing at that time and to present them as a definite system of relations of production, as a definite form of society. To use Marx's expression, the dialectical method, which obliges us to regard society as a living organism in its functioning and development, is alien to him.

Without even asking himself why the old forms of labour are ousted by the new forms, he repeats exactly the same error when he discusses these new forms. It is enough for him to note that these forms "shake" the ownership of the land by the tiller—that is, speaking more generally, find expression in the divorcement of the producer from the means of production—and to condemn this for not conforming to the ideal. And here again his argument is utterly absurd: he plucks out one phenomenon (loss of land), without even attempting to represent it as an element of a now different system of relations of production, based on *commodity production*, which necessarily begets competition among the commodity producers, inequality, the impoverishment of some and the enrichment of others. He noted one phenomenon, the impoverishment of the masses, and put aside the other, the enrichment of the minority, and thereby deprived himself of the possibility of comprehending either.

And such methods he calls "seeking answers to the questions of life clothed in flesh and blood" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1894, No. 1), when as a matter of fact quite the contrary is the case: unable and unwilling to explain reality, to look it straight in the face, he ignominiously fled from these questions of life, with its struggle of the haves against the have-nots, to the realm of pious utopias. This he calls "seeking answers to the questions of life in the ideal treatment of their actual burning and complex reality" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 1), when as a matter of fact he did not even attempt to analyze and explain this actual reality.

Instead, he presented us with a utopia contrived by senselessly plucking individual elements from various forms of society—taking one thing from the medieval form, another from the "new" form, and so on. It is obvious that a theory based on this was bound to stand aloof from actual social evolution, for the simple reason that our utopians had to live and act not under social relations formed from elements taken from here and from there, but under those which determine the relation of the peasant to the kulak (the thrifty muzhik), of the handicraftsman to the dealer, of the worker to the factory owner, and which they completely failed to comprehend. Their attempts and efforts to remould these uncomprehended relations in accordance with their ideal were bound to end in failure.

Such, in very general outline, was the position of Socialism in Russia when "the Russian Marxists appeared on the scene."

They began precisely with a criticism of the subjective methods of the earlier Socialists. Not satisfied with merely stating the fact that exploitation exists and condemning it, they desired to *explain* it. Realizing that the whole post-Reform history of Russia[30] consisted in the impoverishment of the mass and the enrichment of a minority, observing the colossal expropriation of the small producers side by side with universal technical progress, noting that these opposite tendencies arose and became intensified wherever, and to the extent that, commodity production developed and became consolidated, they could not but conclude that they were confronted with a bourgeois (capitalist) organi-

zation of social economy, which *necessarily* gave rise to the expropriation and oppression of the masses. Their practical program was quite directly determined by this conviction; this program was, to join the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, the struggle of the propertyless classes against the propertied, which constitutes the principal content of economic reality in Russia, from the most out-of-the-way village to the most up-to-date and perfected factory. How were they to join it? The answer was again suggested by real life. Capitalism had brought the principal branches of industry to the stage of large-scale machine industry; by thus socializing production, it had created the material conditions for a new system and had at the same time created a new social force—the class of factory workers, the urban proletariat. Subjected to the same bourgeois exploitation—for such, in its economic essence, is the exploitation to which the whole toiling population of Russia is subjected—this class, however, has been placed in a special, favourable position as far as its emancipation is concerned: it has no longer any ties with the old society, which is wholly based on exploitation; the very conditions of its labour and circumstances of life organize it, compel it to think and enable it to step into the arena of the political struggle. It was only natural that the Social-Democrats should direct all their attention to, and base all their hopes on, this class, that they should make the development of its class consciousness their program, that they should direct all their activities towards helping it to rise and wage a direct political struggle against

the present regime and towards drawing the whole Russian proletariat into this struggle.

Let us now see how Mr. Mikhailovsky fights the Social-Democrats. What arguments does he level against their theoretical views, against their political, socialist activity?

The theoretical views of the Marxists are set forth by the critic in the following manner:

"The truth" (the Marxists are represented as declaring) "is that in accordance with the immanent laws of historical necessity Russia will develop her own capitalist production, with all its inherent contradictions and the swallowing up of the small capitalists by the large, and meanwhile the muzhik, divorced from the land, will become transformed into a proletarian, unite, become 'socialized,' and the hat trick is performed, it only remains to put the hat on the head of now happy mankind."

And so, if you please, the Marxists do not differ in any way from the "friends of the people" in their conception of reality; they differ only in their idea of the future: they are not in the least concerned with the present, it appears, but only with "prospects." That this is precisely Mr. Mikhailovsky's idea, there can be no doubt: the Marxists, he says, "are fully convinced that there is nothing utopian in their forecasts of the future, and that everything has been weighed and measured in accordance with the strict dictates of science." And, finally, he says, even more explicitly, that the Marxists "believe in and confess the immutability of an abstract historical scheme."

In a word, what we find levelled at the Marxists is that most banal and vulgar accusation to which all those who have nothing substantial to bring against their views have long resorted. "The Marxists believe in the immutability of an abstract historical scheme"!!

But, this is a downright lie and an invention!

No Marxist has ever argued anywhere that there "must be" capitalism in Russia "because" there was capitalism in the West, and so on. No Marxist has ever regarded Marx's theory as a universally compulsory philosophical scheme of history, or as anything more than an explanation of a particular social-economic formation. Only Mr. Mikhailovsky, the subjective philosopher, has managed to betray such a lack of understanding of Marx as to attribute to him a universal philosophical theory; and in reply to this, he received from Marx the quite explicit explanation that he was knocking at the wrong door. No Marxist has ever based his Social-Democratic views on anything but their conformity with the realities and the history of the given, that is, the Russian social and economic relations; and he could not have done so, because this demand on theory was quite definitely and clearly proclaimed and made the cornerstone of the whole doctrine by the founder of "Marxism" himself, namely, Marx.

Of course, Mr. Mikhailovsky may try as much as he pleases to refute these statements by arguing that he has heard "with his own ears" the confession of an abstract historical scheme. But what does it matter to us, the Social-Democrats, or to anybody else for that matter, that Mr. Mikhailovsky has had

occasion to hear all sorts of absurd nonsense from the people he has talked with? Does it not only show that he is very fortunate in the choice of the people he talks with, and nothing more? It is very possible, of course, that the witty people with whom the witty philosopher talks call themselves Marxists, Social-Democrats, and so forth—but who does not know that nowadays (as was noted long ago) every adventurer likes to deck himself in a "red" cloak?* And if Mr. Mikhailovsky is so perspicacious that he cannot distinguish these "mummers" from Marxists, or if he has understood Marx so profoundly as not to have noted this criterion of his whole doctrine (the formulation of "what is going on before our eyes") that Marx so emphatically stressed, it only shows again that Mr. Mikhailovsky is not very intelligent, and nothing else.

At any rate, since he undertook to conduct a polemic in the press against the "Social-Democrats," he should have dealt with the group of Socialists who have long borne that name and have borne it alone, so no others can be confounded with them, and who have their literary representatives—Plekhanov and his circle.[31] And had he done so—and that obviously is what anybody with any decency should have done—and had consulted at least the first Social-Democratic work, Plekhanov's *Our Differences*, he would have found in its very first pages a cate-

* All this is said on the assumption that Mr. Mikhailovsky has indeed heard confessions of abstract historical schemes and has not prevaricated. But I consider it absolutely imperative in this connection to make the reservation that I give this only for what it is worth.

gorical declaration made by the author on behalf of all the members of the circle:

"We in no case desire to shelter our program under the authority of a great name" (i.e., the authority of Marx). Do you understand Russian, Mr. Mikhailovsky? Do you understand the difference between believing in abstract schemes and entirely disclaiming the authority of Marx when passing judgment on Russian affairs?

Do you realize that, by presenting the first opinion you happened to hear from the people you talk with as a Marxist opinion, and by ignoring the published declaration made by one of the prominent members of Social-Democracy on behalf of the whole group, you acted dishonestly?

And then the declaration becomes even more explicit:

"I repeat," Plekhanov says, "that differences of opinion regarding the appraisal of present-day Russian realities are possible among the most consistent Marxists" . . . our doctrine "is the first attempt to apply this scientific theory to an analysis of very complex and intricate social relations."

It would seem difficult to speak more clearly: the Marxists unreservedly borrow from Marx's theory only its invaluable methods, without which an explanation of social relations is impossible, and consequently they consider the criterion of their judgment of these relations to lie in its fidelity and conformity to reality, and not in abstract schemes and suchlike nonsense.

Perhaps you think that in making these statements the author actually had something else in

mind? But that is not so. The question he was dealing with was—"must Russia pass through the capitalist phase of development?" Hence, the question was not formulated in a Marxist way but in accordance with the subjective methods of some of our native philosophers, for whom the criterion of this "must" lies in the policy of the authorities, or in the activities of "society," or in the ideal of a society which is "in harmony with human nature," and similar piffle. The question then arises, how would a man who believes in abstract schemes have answered such a question? Obviously, he would speak of the unimpeachableness of the dialectical process, of the universal philosophical importance of Marx's theory, of the inevitability of every country passing through the phase of . . . and so on and so forth.

And how did Plekhanov answer it?

In the only way a Marxist could answer it.

He entirely left aside the question of what must be, considering it an idle one that could interest only subjectivists, and dealt all the time only with real social and economic relations and their actual evolution. And that is why he did not give a direct answer to this wrongly-formulated question, but instead replied: "Russia *has entered* on the capitalist path."

But Mr. Mikhailovsky, with the air of an expert, talks about believing in abstract historical schemes, about the immanent laws of necessity, and similar incredible nonsense! And he calls this "a polemic against the Social-Democrats"!!

If this is a polemicist, then I simply fail to understand what a windbag is!

One must also observe in connection with Mr. Mikhailovsky's argument quoted above that he represents the views of the Social-Democrats as being that "Russia *will develop* her own capitalist production." Evidently, in the opinion of this philosopher, Russia has not got "her own" capitalist production. The author apparently shares the opinion that Russian capitalism is confined to one and a half million workers. We shall later on again meet with this childish idea of our "friends of the people," who class all the other forms of exploitation of free labour under heaven knows what heading. "Russia will develop her own capitalist production with all its inherent contradictions . . . and meanwhile the muzhik, divorced from the land, will become transformed into a proletarian." The deeper the forest, the thicker the trees! So there are no "inherent contradictions" in Russia? Or, to put it plainly, there is no exploitation of the mass of the people by a handful of capitalists; there is no impoverishment of the vast majority of the population and no enrichment of a few? The muzhik has still to be divorced from the land? What is the whole post-Reform history of Russia, if not the wholesale expropriation of the peasantry to a hitherto unparalleled degree? One must possess great courage indeed to say such things publicly. And Mr. Mikhailovsky possesses that courage: "Marx dealt with a ready-made proletariat and a ready-made capitalism, whereas we have still to create them." Russia has still to create a proletariat?! In Russia—in which alone can be found such hopeless poverty of the masses and such shameless exploitation of the toilers;

which in respect to the condition of her poor has been compared (and legitimately) with England; and in which the starvation of millions of people is a permanent phenomenon existing side by side, for instance, with a steady increase in the export of grain—in Russia there is no proletariat!!

I think Mr. Mikhailovsky deserves to have a monument erected to him in his lifetime for these classic words!*

But we shall see later that this is a constant and most consistent tactical manoeuvre of the "friends of the people," namely, pharisaically to shut their eyes to the intolerable condition of the toilers in Russia, to depict it as having been only "shaken," so that all that is needed is an effort on the part of "cultured society" and of the government to put everything on the right track. These gallant knights think that if they shut their eyes to the fact that the condition of the toiling masses is bad not because it has been "shaken," but because these masses are being shamelessly robbed by a handful of exploiters, that if they bury their heads in the sand like ostriches so as not to see these exploiters, the exploiters will

* But perhaps here too Mr. Mikhailovsky may try to wriggle out of it by declaring that he did not intend to say that there is no proletariat in Russia in general, but only that there is no capitalist proletariat? Is that so? Then why did you not say so? Why, *the whole question* is whether the Russian proletariat is a proletarian characteristic of the bourgeois or of some other organization of social economy. Who is to blame if in the course of two whole articles you did not say *a word* about this, the only serious and important question, but preferred instead to jabber all sorts of nonsense and to blarney for all you are worth?

disappear. And when the Social-Democrats tell them that it is shameful cowardice to fear to look reality in the face; when they take the fact of exploitation as their starting point and say that its only possible explanation lies in the bourgeois organization of Russian society, which is splitting the people into proletariat and bourgeoisie, and in the class character of the Russian state, which is nothing but the organ of the rule of the bourgeoisie, and that therefore *the only way out* lies in the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie—these "friends of the people" begin to howl that the Social-Democrats want to deprive the people of their land!! that they want to destroy our people's economic organization!!

We now come to the most outrageous part of this whole, to say the least, indecent "polemic," namely, Mr. Mikhailovsky's "criticism" (?) of the political activities of the Social-Democrats. Everybody realizes that the activities carried on among the workers by Socialists and agitators cannot be honestly discussed in our legal press, and that the only thing a self-respecting censored periodical can do in this connection is to "maintain a tactful silence." Mr. Mikhailovsky has forgotten this most elementary of rules, and has not scrupled to take advantage of his monopoly contact with the reading public in order to sling mud at the Socialists.

However, means of combating this unscrupulous critic will be found even if outside the legal publications.

"As far as I understand," Mr. Mikhailovsky says with assumed naïveté, "the Russian Marxists

can be divided into three categories: Marxist spectators (indifferent observers of the process), passive Marxists (they only 'allay the birth pangs'; they 'are not interested in the people on the land, and direct their attention and hopes to those who are already divorced from the means of production'), and active Marxists (who bluntly insist on the further ruin of the countryside)."

What is this?! Mr. Critic must surely know that the Russian Marxists are Socialists who take as their point of departure the view that the reality around us is capitalist society, and that there is only one way out of it—the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. How then, and on what grounds, does he mix them up in one heap with some sort of senseless vulgarity? What right (moral, of course) has he to apply the term Marxists to people who obviously do not accept the most elementary and fundamental tenets of Marxism, people who have never and nowhere appeared as a distinct group and have never and nowhere proclaimed a program of their own?

Mr. Mikhailovsky has left himself a number of loopholes for justifying such monstrous methods.

"Perhaps," he says with the easy air of a society fop, "these are not real Marxists, but they consider and proclaim themselves as such." Where have they proclaimed it, and when? In the liberal and radical salons of St. Petersburg? In private letters? Be it so. Well then, talk to them in your salons and in your correspondence! But you come out publicly and in the press against people who (under the banner of Marxism) have never come out publicly anywhere.

And you have the effrontery to claim that you are arguing against "Social-Democrats," although you know that this name is borne only by *one* group of revolutionary Socialists, and that nobody else can be confused with them!*

Mr. Mikhailovsky wriggles and squirms, like a schoolboy caught red-handed: "I am not the least to blame here"—he tries to make the reader believe—"I 'heard it with my own ears and saw it with my own eyes.'" Excellent! We are quite willing to believe that there is nobody in your field of vision but vulgarians and rascals. But why drag us, the Social-Democrats, into it? Who does not know that "at the present time, when" not only socialist activity, but all social activity that is at all independent and honest evokes political persecution—for every one who is actually working under one

* I shall dwell on at least one *factual* reference which occurs in Mr. Mikhailovsky's article. Anybody who has read this article will have to admit that he includes Mr. Skvortsov (the author of *The Economic Causes of Starvation*) among the "Marxists." But, as a matter of fact, this gentleman does not call himself a Marxist, and one needs only a most elementary acquaintance with the works of the Social-Democrats to see that from their standpoint he is nothing but a vulgar bourgeois. What sort of a Marxist is he when he does not understand that the social environment for which he projects his progressive measures is a bourgeois environment, and that therefore all "agricultural improvements," which are indeed to be observed even in peasant husbandry, are bourgeois progress, improving the position of a minority but proletarianizing the masses! What sort of a Marxist is he when he does not understand that the state to which he appeals with his projects is a class state, capable only of supporting the bourgeoisie and oppressing the proletariat.

banner or another—be it Narodovolism, Marxism, or even, let us say, constitutionalism—there are several score phrasemongers who under cover of that name conceal their liberal cowardice, and, in addition, perhaps, several downright rascals who are arranging their own shady affairs? Is it not obvious that it requires the vilest kind of vulgarity to blame any of these trends for the fact that its banner is being besmirched (privately and on the quiet, at that) by every sort of riffraff? Mr. Mikhailovsky's whole argument is one chain of distortions and subterfuges. We saw above that he completely distorted the "truths" on which the Social-Democrats base themselves, presenting them in a way in which no Marxist has ever presented them, or could have presented them, anywhere. And if he had set forth the actual conception which the Social-Democrats have of Russian realities, he could not but have seen that one can "conform" to these views *only in one way*, namely, by helping to develop the class consciousness of the proletariat, by organizing and uniting it for the political struggle against the present regime. He has, however, one other trick up his sleeve. With an air of injured innocence he pharisaically lifts up his eyes heavenward and unctuously declares: "I am very glad to hear that. But I cannot understand what you are protesting against" (that is exactly what he says in the *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 2). "Read my comment on passive Marxists more attentively and you will see that I say: from the ethical standpoint, no objection can be made."

This, too, of course, is nothing but a re-hash of his former wretched subterfuges.

Tell us, please, how would the conduct of a person be characterized who declared that he was criticizing social-revolutionary Narodism (when no other had yet appeared—I take such a period), and who proceeded to say approximately the following:

"The Narodniks, as far as I understand, are divided into three categories: the consistent Narodniks, who completely accept the ideas of the muzhik and, in exact accordance with his desires, would make a general principle of the birch and wife-beating and generally further the abominable policy of the government of the knout and club, which, you know, has been called a narodni* policy; then, the cowardly Narodniks, who are not interested in the opinions of the muzhik, and are only striving to transplant to Russia an alien revolutionary movement by means of associations and suchlike—against which, however, no objection can be made from the ethical standpoint, unless it be the slipperiness of the path, which may easily convert a cowardly Narodnik into a consistent or a courageous one; and, lastly, the courageous Narodniks, who carry out to the full the narodni ideals of the thrifty muzhik, and accordingly settle on the land in order to live as kulaks in good earnest." All decent people, of course, would characterize this as vile and vulgar scoffing. And if, further, the person who said such things could not be rebutted by the Narodniks in the same press; if, moreover, the ideas of these Narodniks had hitherto been set forth only

* I.e., people's.—*Tr.*

illegally, so that many people had no exact idea of what they are and might easily believe everything they were told about the Narodniks—then everybody would agree that such a person is. . . .

But perhaps Mr. Mikhailovsky himself has not yet quite forgotten the word that fits here.

But enough! Many similar insinuations by Mr. Mikhailovsky still remain. I do not know of any labour that is more fatiguing, more thankless, more disgusting than to have to wallow in this filth, to cull insinuations scattered here and there, to compare them and to search for at least one serious objection.

Enough!

April 1894

PUBLISHER'S NOTE[32]

The reader will find in the text of the article references to a further analysis of certain questions, when as a matter of fact no further analysis is given.

The reason is that the present article is only the first part of a reply to the articles on Marxism which appeared in the *Russkoye Bogatstvo*. Extreme pressure of other affairs has prevented us from publishing this article in time, but we consider it impossible to delay it any longer; we are two months late as it is. That is why we have decided for the present to publish the analysis of Mr. Mikhailovsky's "criticism," without waiting until the whole article is printed.

In addition to the present analysis, the reader will find in the 2nd and 3rd editions, which are now in course of preparation, an analysis of the social and economic views of other leading figures on *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, Messrs. Yuzhakov and S. Krivenko, in connection with an essay on economic realities in Russia and the "ideas and tactics of the Social-Democrats" that follow therefrom.

NOTE TO THE PRESENT EDITION [33]

The present edition is an exact reproduction of the first. Having had no share whatever in compiling the text, we did not consider ourselves at liberty to alter it in any way and simply confined ourselves to the work of publication. Our motive for undertaking this work was the conviction that the present pamphlet will serve to bring about a certain invigoration of our Social-Democratic propaganda.

Believing that one indispensable corollary of Social-Democratic convictions should be a readiness to serve the cause of such propaganda, we appeal to all who share the views of the author of the present pamphlet to assist by every means in their power (especially, of course, by republication) in securing the widest possible dissemination both of the present work and of all organs of Marxist propaganda generally. The present moment is particularly opportune for this. The *Russkoye Bogatstvo* is assuming an increasingly provocative tone towards us. In its anxiety to paralyze the spread of Social-Democratic ideas in society, that magazine has gone so far as to accuse us outright of being indifferent to the interests of the proletariat and of insisting on the

impoverishment of the masses. We make bold to think that by such methods it will only defeat its own purpose and pave the way for our victory. However, it should not be forgotten that these calumniators command every material means of widely broadcasting their calumnies. They possess a magazine with a circulation of several thousand copies; they have reading rooms and libraries at their service. It will therefore be necessary to exert every effort to prove to our enemies that even the advantages of a privileged position are not always enough to ensure the success of insinuation. We are firmly convinced that this effort will be forthcoming.

July 1894

PART III

Let us, in conclusion, make the acquaintance of Mr. Krivenko, another "friend of the people," who also launches into an open war against the Social-Democrats.

However, we shall not analyze his articles ("Our Cultural Freelances," in No. 12, 1893, and "Travel Letters," in No. 1, 1894) in the same way as we did those of Messrs. Mikhailovsky and Yuzhakov. An analysis in toto of their articles was essential so as to get a clear idea, in the case of the former, of the substance of their objections to materialism and to Marxism in general, and, in the case of the latter, of their political-economic theories. To get a complete idea of the "friends of the people," we must now acquaint ourselves with their tactics, their practical proposals and their political program. This program they do not set forth anywhere outright or with the same consistency and fullness as their theoretical views. I am therefore obliged to cull it from various articles in their magazine whose contributors are unanimous enough not to contradict each other. I shall give preference to Mr. Krivenko's above-mentioned articles merely because they furnish more material and because their author is just as typical of the magazine

in practical matters, in politics, as Mr. Mikhailovsky is in sociology and Mr. Yuzhakov in economics.

However, before passing on to their program, it is absolutely essential to dwell on one more theoretical point. We have already seen how Mr. Yuzhakov makes shift with meaningless phrases about land renting by the people representing a support of popular husbandry, and the like, with which he disguises the fact that he does not understand the economic life of our tillers. He did not deal with the kustar trades at all, but confined himself to data on the growth of large-scale factory industry. Now Mr. Krivenko goes in for exactly the same sort of phrasemongering with regard to the kustar trades. He flatly contrasts "our popular industry," i.e., kustar industry, to capitalist industry (No. 12, pp. 180-81). "Popular production," (*sic*!) says he, "in the majority of cases arises naturally," whereas capitalist industry "is most often created artificially." In another passage he contrasts "small, popular industry" to "large-scale, capitalist industry." If you were to ask what is the distinguishing feature of the former, you would only learn that it is "small"* and that the implements of labour are united with the producer (I borrow

* The only other thing you would learn is this: "From it may develop real" (*sic*!) "popular industry," says Mr. Krivenko. A common trick of the "friends of the people"—to utter idle and meaningless phrases instead of giving a precise and direct description of reality.

this latter definition from Mr. Mikhailovsky's above-mentioned article). But this in no way defines its economic organization—and what is more, it is absolutely untrue. Mr. Krivenko says, for example, that "small popular industry to this day yields a much larger gross output and employs a larger number of hands than large-scale capitalist industry." The author is evidently referring to the statistics on the number of handicraftsmen, who total as many as four million, or, according to another estimate, seven million. But who is not aware of the fact that the predominant form of economy among our kustar trades is the domestic system of large-scale production? that the mass of the kustars occupy by no means an independent position in production, but rather a completely dependent, subordinate one? that they work up not their own material but the material supplied by the merchant, who only pays the kustar a wage? The figures bearing out the predominance of this form have been adduced even in legal literature. I shall cite, for example, the excellent work by the well-known statistician, S. Kharizomenov, published in *Yuridichesky Vestnik*[34] (1883, Nos. 11 and 12). Summarizing the published data on the kustar trades in our central gubernias, where they are most highly developed, S. Kharizomenov arrived at the conclusion that the domestic system of large-scale production, i.e., an unquestionably capitalist form of industry, positively predominates. "Defining the economic role of small independent industry," he says, "we arrive at the following conclusions: in the Moscow

Gubernia 86.5 per cent of the annual turnover of kustar industry is accounted for by the domestic system of large-scale production, and only 13.5 per cent by small independent industry. In the Alexandrov and Pokrov uyezds of the Vladimir Gubernia, 96 per cent of the annual turnover of the kustar industry falls to the share of the domestic system of large-scale production and manufacture, and only four per cent is accounted for by small independent industry."

As far as we know, nobody has tried to refute these facts; nor can they be refuted. How is it then, that they ignore these facts, say nothing about them, call such industry "popular," in contradistinction to capitalist industry, and talk about the possibility of its developing into real industry?

There can be only one explanation of this direct ignoring of facts, namely, the general tendency of the "friends of the people," as of all Russian liberals, to gloss over the antagonism of classes and the exploitation of the toilers in Russia by representing all this as merely so many "defects." Perhaps an additional reason lies in so profound a knowledge of the subject as is revealed, for instance, by Mr. Krivenko when he calls the "Pavlovo cutlery industry"—"an industry of a semihandicraft character." The lengths of distortion to which the "friends of the people" will go are simply phenomenal! How can you say that this industry is handicraft in character, when the Pavlovo cutlers produce for the market and not to order? Perhaps Mr. Krivenko classes as a hand-

icraft occupation the system under which the merchant orders articles from the kustars to send to the Nizhni Novgorod fair? That would be too funny, but it must be so. As a matter of fact the making of cutlery (compared with other Pavlovo industries) has least of all preserved the small kustar form, with its (seemingly) independent producers. "The production of table and industrial cutlery,"* says N. F. Annensky, "is already largely approaching the factory or, more correctly, the manufactory form."[35] Of the 396 kustars engaged in the making of table cutlery in the Nizhni Novgorod Gubernia, only 62 (16 per cent) work for the market, 273 (69 per cent) work for a master,** and 61 (15 per cent) are wageworkers. Hence, only one-sixth of the handicraftsmen are not directly enslaved to an entrepreneur. As to the other branch of the cutlery industry—the production of folding knives (penknives)—the same author says that it "occupies a position midway between the table knife and the lock: the majority of the craftsmen in this branch are already working for a master, but at the same time there are still a fairly large number of independent kustars who do business for the market."

In the Nizhni Novgorod Gubernia there are in all 2,552 kustars producing this sort of cutlery, of whom 48 per cent (1,236) work for the market, 42 per cent (1,058) work for masters, and 10 per

* The largest of the Pavlovo industries, accounting for 900,000 rubles out of a total output of 2,750,000 rubles.

** I.e., for the merchant, who supplies the kustar with materials and pays him ordinary wages for his labour.

cent (258) are wageworkers. Consequently, here too the independent (?) kustars are in the minority. And the independence even of those who work for the market is, of course, only nominal; actually they are no less enslaved to the *capital* of the dealers who buy their products. If we take the figures for all the trades in the Gorbatov Uyezd, Nizhni Novgorod Gubernia, where the number of workers engaged in trades is 21,983, or 84.5 *per cent of the total number of workers,** we discover the following (exact statistics on the economy of the trades are available for only 10,808 workers, engaged in the following trades: metal, leather, harness, felt and hemp yarn): 35.6 per cent of the kustars work for the market, 46.7 per cent work for the masters, and 17.7 per cent are wageworkers. Thus *here too we see the predominance of the domestic system of large-scale production, the predominance of relations under which labour is enslaved to capital.*

Another reason why the "friends of the people" so freely ignore facts of this kind is that their conception of capitalism has not advanced beyond the commonplace vulgar idea that a capitalist=a wealthy and educated entrepreneur who runs a large machine enterprise—and they want to know

* The Russian exceptionalist economists, who measure Russian capitalism by the number of factory workers (*sic!*), unceremoniously class these workers, and the multitudes like them, among the people engaged in agriculture and suffering not from the yoke of capital, but from pressure artificially exerted on the "popular system" (???!!).

nothing about the scientific meaning of this term. In the preceding chapter we saw that Mr. Yuzhakov dates the beginning of capitalism directly from machine industry, omitting simple cooperation and manufacture. This is a widespread error, one consequence of which is that the capitalist organization of our kustar trades is overlooked.

It goes without saying that the domestic system of large-scale production is a capitalist form of industry: here we have all its features—commodity production already at a high level of development, the concentration of the means of production in the hands of a few individuals, and the expropriation of the mass of the workers, who do not possess their own means of production and therefore apply their labour to those of others, working not for themselves but for the capitalist. Obviously, in its organization, kustar industry is pure capitalism; it differs from large-scale machine industry in its technical backwardness (chiefly due to the preposterously low level of wages) and in the fact that the worker retains a diminutive farm. This latter circumstance particularly confuses the "friends of the people," who, as befits true metaphysicians, are accustomed to think in naked and direct contrasts: "Yea, yea—nay, nay, and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one."

If the workers have no land—there is capitalism; if the workers have land—there is no capitalism. And they confine themselves to this soothing philosophy, losing sight of the whole social

organization of production and forgetting the generally-known fact that ownership of land does not in the least obviate the dire poverty of these landowners, who are most shamelessly robbed by other "peasant" landowners like them.

They do not know, it seems, that capitalism—while still at a comparatively low level of development—was nowhere able completely to divorce the worker from the land. In relation to Western Europe, Marx established the law that only large-scale machine industry completely expropriates the worker. It is therefore obvious that the common argument that there is no capitalism in our country for the reason that "the people own land" is quite meaningless, because the capitalism of simple cooperation and manufacture has never been associated anywhere with the complete divorcement of the worker from the land; yet, of course, it was capitalism none the less.

As to large-scale machine industry in Russia—and this is the form the biggest and most important branches of our industry are rapidly assuming—here too, in spite of all the peculiar features of our development, it possesses the same property that it possesses everywhere in the capitalist West, namely, it absolutely will not tolerate the preservation of the worker's connection with the land. This fact was, incidentally, proved by Dementyev[36] with precise statistical material, from which he drew (quite independently of Marx) the conclusion that machine production is inseparably associated with the complete divorcement of the worker from the land. This investigation served

to demonstrate once more that Russia is a capitalist country, that the worker's connection with the land in Russia is so feeble and evanescent, and the power of the man of property (the money owner, the dealer, the rich peasant, the manufactory owner, etc.) so firmly established, that one more stride in technology will be enough to transform the "peasant" (?? who has long been living by the sale of his labour power) into a worker pure and simple.* But the lack of understanding of the economic organization of our kustar trades on the part of the "friends of the people" is by no means confined to this. Their idea even of those trades where work is not done "for the master" is just as superficial as their idea of the tiller (which we have already seen). This, however, is quite natural in the case of people who presume to hold forth on questions of political economy when all they know, it seems, is that there is such a thing in the world as means of production, which "may" be united with the toiler—and that is very good; but which "may" also be separated from him—and that is very bad. But this will not carry you far.

Speaking of trades that are becoming capitalist and of trades that are not (where "small production can easily exist"), Mr. Krivenko says, for one thing, that in certain branches "the basic expend-

* The domestic system of large-scale production is not only a capitalist system, but the worst kind of capitalist system, under which the most intense exploitation of the toiler is combined with the least opportunity for the workers to wage a struggle for their emancipation.

iture on production" is very inconsiderable and in these branches small production is therefore possible. He cites as an example the brickmaking industry, where the expenditure, he says, may be one-fifteenth of the annual turnover of the brickyards.

As this is almost the only reference the author makes to facts (it is, I repeat, the most characteristic feature of subjective sociology that it shuns a direct and precise description and analysis of realities, preferring to soar in the sphere of the "ideals" . . . of the petty bourgeois), let us take it, in order to show how false are the ideas of the "friends of the people" about actual realities.

We find a description of the brick industry (the making of bricks from white clay) in the economic statistics of the Moscow Zemstvo (*Statistical Report*, Vol. VII, Book I, Part 2, etc.). The industry is chiefly concentrated in three volosts of the Bogorodsk Uyezd, where there are 233 establishments, employing 1,402 workers (567, or 41 per cent, being family workers,* and 835, or 59 per cent, hired workers), with an annual aggregate output valued at 357,000 rubles. The industry is an old one, but it has particularly developed during the past fifteen years owing to the building of a railway, which has greatly facilitated the marketing of the goods. Before the railway was built the family form of production pre-

* By "family" workers are meant working members of the owners' families, in contradistinction to hired workers.

dominated, but it is now giving way to the exploitation of wage labour. This industry, too, is not exempt from the dependence of the small producer on the large producer as far as the disposal of the product is concerned: owing to "lack of funds" the former sell their bricks (often "raw"—unbaked) to the latter on the spot at frightfully low prices.

However, we are able to acquaint ourselves with the organization of the industry apart from this dependence thanks to a household census of kustars which is appended to the essay, where the number of workers and the value of the annual output of each establishment are indicated.

To ascertain whether the law that commodity production is capitalist production—i.e., that the former is inevitably converted into the latter at a certain stage of development—applies to this industry, we must compare the establishments according to size: the problem is precisely one of the relation between the small and the large establishments judged by their share of the output and by the exploitation of wage labour. Taking the number of workers as a basis, we divide the kustar establishments into three groups: I) establishments employing 1 to 5 workers (both family workers and hired workers); II) establishments employing 6 to 10 workers, and III) establishments employing over 10 workers.

Examining the size of the establishments, the kind of workers employed and the output in each group, we obtain the following data:

Group of kustar establishments according to number of workers employed	Average number of workers per establishment	Per cent		Annual output per worker (rubles)	Per cent of total			Absolute figures		
		Establishments employing hired workers	Hired workers		Establishments	Workers	Output	Number of establishments*	Number of workers	Annual output (rubles)
I. Employing 1 to 5 workers	2.8	25	19	251	72	34	34	167/43	476/92	119,500
II. Employing 6 to 10 workers	7.3	90	58	249	18	23	22	43/39	317/186	79,000
III. Employing over 10 workers	26.4	100	91	260	10	43	44	23/23	609/557	158,500
All groups	6.0	45	59	254	100	100	100	233/105	1,402/835	357,000

* The denominators indicate the number of establishments employing hired workers and the number of hired workers employed—same in the next table.

Examine these figures and you will perceive the bourgeois, or, what is the same thing, the capitalist organization of the industry: the larger the establishment, the higher the productivity of labour* (the middle group is an exception), the greater the exploitation of wage labour** and the greater the concentration of production.***

The third group, in which production is almost entirely based on wage labour, while comprising 10 per cent of the total number of establishments, accounts for 44 per cent of the aggregate output.

This concentration of the means of production in the hands of a minority associated with the expropriation of the majority (the wageworkers) explains both the dependence of the small producers *on the dealers (the big manufacturers are in* fact dealers) and the oppression of labour in this trade. Hence we see that the *cause* of the expropriation and of the exploitation of the toiler lies in the relations of production themselves.

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* The annual output per worker in Group I is 251 rubles; in Group II—249 rubles; in Group III—260 rubles.

** The proportion of establishments employing hired labour is 25 per cent in Group I, 90 per cent in Group II and 100 per cent in Group III; the proportion of hired workers is 19 per cent, 58 per cent and 91 per cent, respectively.

*** Group I, comprising 72 per cent of the total establishments, accounts for 34 per cent of the total output; group II: 18 per cent of the establishments, 22 per cent of the output; Group III: 10 per cent of the establishments, 44 per cent of the output.

The Russian Narodnik Socialists, as we know, held the opposite view and considered the cause of the oppression of labour in the kustar trades to lie not in the relations of production (which were proclaimed to be based on a principle which precluded exploitation), but outside of them—in politics, namely, in agrarian policy, fiscal policy and so on. The question arises, what was, and is, the reason for the persistence of this opinion, which has now acquired almost the tenacity of a prejudice? Was it the prevalence of a *different* idea of the relations of production in the kustar trades? Not at all. It persists only because of the absence of an attempt *to give an accurate and definite description of the facts, of the real forms of economic organization*; it persists only because the relations of production are not singled out and submitted to an independent analysis. In a word, it persists solely because of a failure to understand the only scientific method of social science, namely, the materialist method. We can now understand the train of thought of our old Socialists. As regards the kustar trades, they attributed the cause of exploitation to facts lying *outside* the relations of production; as regards large-scale, factory capitalism, they could not help seeing that *there* the cause of exploitation lies precisely in the relations of production. The result was an irreconcilable contradiction, an incongruity; how this large-scale capitalism could have sprung up when there was nothing capitalistic in the relations of production of the kustar trades (which relations were not even investigated!) seemed inexpli-

cable. The conclusion follows naturally: failing to understand the connection between kustar and capitalist industry they contrasted the former to the latter, as "popular" industry to "artificial" industry. The idea arose that capitalism contradicts our "popular system"—an idea that is very widespread and was quite recently presented to the Russian public in a revised and improved edition by Mr. Nikolai —on.[37] This idea persists purely by inertia—despite its phenomenal illogicalness: factory capitalism is judged on the basis of what it actually is in reality, whereas handicraft industry is judged on the basis of what it "might be"; the former on the basis of an analysis of the relations of production, the latter without even an attempt to examine the relations of production separately, the matter being directly transferred to the sphere of politics. We have only to turn to an analysis of these relations of production to find that the "popular system" consists of these very same capitalist relations of production, although in an undeveloped, embryonic state; that—if we reject the naive prejudice that all kustars are equal, and accurately set forth the differences among them—the difference between the "capitalist" of the mill or factory and the "kustar" will at times prove to be less than the difference between one "kustar" and another; and that *capitalism does not contradict the "popular system" but is the direct, next and immediate continuation and development of it.*

Perhaps, however, it will be argued that the

example quoted is unsuitable; we may be told that generally the percentage of wageworkers in the given case is too high?* But, as a matter of fact, the important thing here is not the absolute figures but the *relations* they disclose, relations which are essentially bourgeois, and which do not cease to be so whether their bourgeois character is strongly or weakly marked.

If you like, I shall take another example—one deliberately chosen because its bourgeois character is weakly marked. I take (from Mr. Isayev's book on the trades of the Moscow Gubernia) the pottery trade, "a purely domestic industry," as the professor calls it. This trade may, of course, be taken as representative of the small peasant trades: its technique is of the simplest, its equipment quite small and the articles it produces of universal and essential use. And we find that, thanks to a household census of kustars giving the same particulars as in the previous case, we are in a position to study the economic organization of this trade too, one that is undoubtedly quite typical of the great bulk of the Russian small, "popular" trades. We divide the kustars into groups: I) those employing 1 to 3 workers (family and hired); II) those employing 4 to 5 workers, and III) those employing over 5 workers—and make the same calculation:

* This is scarcely true of the trades of the Moscow Gubernia, but it may be true, perhaps, with regard to the less developed trades of the rest of Russia.

Group of kustar establishments according to number of workers employed	Average number of workers per establishment	Per cent		Annual output per worker (rubles)	Per cent of total			Absolute figures		
		Establishments employing hired workers	Hired workers		Establishments	Workers	Output	Number of establishments	Number of workers	Annual output (rubles)
I. Employing 1 to 3 workers.	2.4	39	19	468	60	38	36	72/28	174/33	81,500
II. Employing 4 to 5 workers.	4.3	48	20	498	27	32	32	33/16	144/29	71,800
. Employing over 5 workers.	8.4	100	65	533	13	30	32	16/16	134/87	71,500
All groups	3.7	49	33	497	100	100	100	121/60	452/149	224,800

It is evident that in this trade too—and many similar examples could be quoted at will—the *relations* are bourgeois: we find the same disintegration arising out of commodity production, and it is a specifically capitalist disintegration, leading to the exploitation of wage labour, which already plays a primary part in the higher group, where with one-eighth of the total number of establishments and 30 per cent of the total number of workers, nearly one-third of the total output is produced and the productivity of labour is considerably above the average. These relations of production alone are enough to explain the appearance and power of the dealers. We see that the minority, owning larger and more profitable establishments, and receiving a "net" income from the labour of others (in the higher group of potters there is an average of 5.5 wageworkers per establishment), accumulate "savings," while the majority become impoverished, and even the small masters (not to mention the wageworkers) are unable to make ends meet. It is obvious and inevitable that the latter should be enslaved to the former—inevitable precisely because of the capitalist character of the given relations of production. These relations consist in the fact that the product of the social labour, organized by commodity production, passes into the hands of private persons and in their hands serves as an instrument for oppressing and enslaving the toilers, as a means of personal enrichment by the exploitation of the masses. And do not think that this exploitation, this oppression,

is any less marked because this character of the relations is still little developed, because the accumulation of *capital* that proceeds side by side with the impoverishment of the producers is negligible. Quite the contrary. This only leads to grosser, feudal forms of exploitation; it leads to the fact that capital, still unable to subjugate the worker directly, by the mere purchase of his labour power at its value, enmeshes the labourer in a veritable net of usurious extortion, binds him to itself by kulak methods, and as a result robs him not only of surplus value but of an enormous part of his wages too, and, what is more, grinds him down by depriving him of the possibility of changing his "master," humiliates him by compelling him to regard as a boon the fact that it "gives" (*sic*!) him work.—Obviously, not a single worker would consent to exchange his status for that of a Russian "independent" kustar in "real," "popular" industry. It is equally obvious that all the favourite measures of the Russian radicals either will not affect the exploitation of the toiler and his enslavement to capital in the least and will remain isolated experiments (artels), or will worsen the conditions of the toilers (inalienability of the land allotments), or lastly, will only purify, develop and consolidate the given capitalist relations (improvement of technique, loans, etc.).

The "friends of the people," however, will never be able to grasp the fact that *capitalism* can exist in peasant industry, in spite of its general wretchedness, its comparatively tiny estab-

lishments and extremely low productivity of labour, its primitive technique and small number of wageworkers. They simply cannot grasp the fact that *capital* signifies certain relations between people, relations which remain the same whether the categories under comparison are at a high or a low level of development. Bourgeois economists have never been able to understand this; they have always objected to such a definition of capital. I recall how one of them, writing in the *Russkaya Mysl* about Sieber's book (on the Marxian theory), quoted this definition (capital is a relation) and put exclamation marks after it and gave vent to disgust.

It is a most characteristic feature of bourgeois philosophers to regard the categories of the bourgeois regime as something eternal and natural. That is why they adopt such definitions for capital as accumulated labour used for further production—that is, define it as an eternal category of human society, thereby glossing over that specific, historically-defined economic formation in which this "accumulated labour," organized by commodity production, falls into the hands of people who do not work and serves to exploit the labour of others. And so, instead of an analysis and study of a definite system of relations of production, they give us a series of banalities applicable to any system, mixed with a sentimental pap of petty-bourgeois morality.

You see now why the "friends of the people" call this industry "popular," and why they contrast it with capitalist industry. It is only

because these gentlemen are petty-bourgeois ideologists and cannot even conceive that these small producers live and operate under a system of commodity production (that is why I call them petty bourgeois) and that their relations to the market necessarily and inevitably split them into a bourgeoisie and a proletariat. If you tried to study the real organization of our "popular" trades instead of phrasemongering about what they "might" lead to, we would see whether you would *find any at all developed branch of kustar industry in Russia which is not organized capitalistically.*

And if you do not agree that the necessary and sufficient features of this term are the monopoly of the means of production by a minority, the freeing of the majority from the means of production, and the exploitation of wage labour (or, speaking more generally, the appropriation by individuals of the product of social labour organized by commodity production—which is the essence of capitalism), then be good enough to give your "own" definition of capitalism and your "own" history of capitalism.

As a matter of fact, the organization of our "popular" handicraft industries furnishes an excellent illustration to the general history of the development of capitalism. It clearly demonstrates the latter's origin, its inception, for example, in the form of simple cooperation (the higher group in the pottery industry); it further shows how the "savings" that—thanks to commodity production—accumulate in the hands of separate

individuals become *capital*, which first monopolizes marketing ("dealers" and traders), owing to the fact that only the owners of these "savings" possess the necessary funds for wholesale marketing, enabling them to wait until the goods are sold in distant markets; how, further, this merchant capital enslaves the mass of producers and organizes capitalist manufacture, the capitalist domestic system of large-scale production; and how, finally, the expansion of the market and increasing competition lead to higher technique, and how this merchant capital becomes industrial capital and organizes large-scale machine production. And when this capital, having grown strong and having enslaved millions of toilers and whole districts, unceremoniously begins to exercise downright pressure on the government and to turn it into its lackey—our wise "friends of the people" raise a howl about "capitalism being implanted," about it being "artificially created"!

A timely discovery, indeed!

And so, when Mr. Krivenko talks about a popular, real, proper, etc., industry, he is simply trying to gloss over the fact that our kustar trades are nothing but capitalism at various stages of development. We have already become sufficiently acquainted with these methods in the case of Mr. Yuzhakov, who, instead of studying the peasant reform, talked about the fundamental aim of the momentous Manifesto, and the like; who, instead of studying the question of land renting, dubbed it popular renting; who, instead of studying how the home market for capi-

talism is evolving, philosophized about the latter's inevitable collapse from lack of markets, and so on.

To show to what extent Messrs. the "friends of the people" distort facts, I shall dwell on one more example:* Our subjective philosophers so rarely condescend to give us precise references to facts that it would be unfair to ignore one they do give, one of their most precise references, namely, the one Mr. Krivenko makes (No. 1, 1894) to the budgets of the Voronezh peasants. Here, on the basis of facts they have themselves selected, we can clearly see whose idea of reality is more correct—that of the Russian radicals and "friends of the people," or that of the Russian Social-Democrats.

Mr. Shcherbina, statistician of the Voronezh Zemstvo, appends to his description of peasant husbandry in the Ostrogozhsk Uyezd the budgets of 24 typical peasant households, and analyzes them in the text.**

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* Although this example concerns the disintegration of the peasantry, about which much has already been said, I consider it necessary to analyze *their own data* in order to demonstrate clearly what an insolent lie it is to assert that the Social-Democrats are interested not in realities but in "prophesying the future," and what charlatan methods the "friends of the people" use when in their controversies with us they ignore the substance of our views and confine themselves to nonsensical phrases.

** *Statistical Report for the Voronezh Gubernia*, Vol. II, Book II. *Peasant Husbandry in the Ostrogozhsk Uyezd*, Voronezh 1887. The budgets are given in the appendices, pp. 42-49, and the analysis in Chapter XVIII: "Composition and Budgets of Peasant Households."

Mr. Krivenko reproduces this analysis, failing, or, rather, refusing to realize, that its methods are entirely unsuitable for the purpose of getting an idea of the economy of our peasant husbandmen. The fact is that these 24 budgets depict entirely different households—prosperous, middle and poor—as Mr. Krivenko himself points out (p. 159); but, like Mr. Shcherbina, he simply operates with *average* figures, lumping together utterly different types of households, and thus completely disguises the fact of their disintegration. Yet the disintegration of our small producers is such a general and major fact (to which the Social-Democrats have long been drawing the attention of Russian Socialists. See the works of Plekhanov) that it is brought out quite distinctly even by the scanty data which Mr. Krivenko has selected. Instead of, when dealing with the *husbandry* of the peasants, dividing them into categories according to size and type of husbandry, he, like Mr. Shcherbina, divides them into legal categories—former state peasants and former landlords' peasants—confines all his attention to the greater prosperity of the former as compared with the latter, and loses sight of the fact that the differences between the peasants within these categories are far greater than the differences between the categories.* To prove this, I divide these

* It is unquestionable that the husbandry of a peasant who lives exclusively by his agricultural enterprise and employs a labourer differs in type from the husbandry of a peasant who works as an agricultural labourer and derives three-fifths of his earnings from this pursuit. And among

24 budgets into three groups. I pick out a) 6 prosperous peasants, then b) 11 middle peasants (Nos. 7 to 10 and 16 to 22 in Shcherbina's table) and c) 7 poor peasants (Nos. 11 to 15, 23 and 24 in Shcherbina's table of budgets). Mr. Krivenko says, for example, that the expenditure per household of the former state peasants are 541.3 rubles, and of the former landlords' peasants 417.7 rubles. But he overlooks the fact that these expenditures are far from being equal within these divisions: among the former state peasants, for instance, there is a peasant with an expenditure of 84.7 rubles and one with an expenditure *ten times as large*—887.4 rubles (even if we leave out of account the German colonist with an expenditure of 1,456.2 rubles). What is the value of an average derived by lumping together figures like these? If we take the division into categories that I give, we find that the average expenditure per household of a prosperous peasant is 855.86 rubles, of a middle peasant 471.61 rubles and of a poor peasant 223.78 rubles.*

The ratio is, roughly, 4:2:1.

Let us proceed. Following in Shcherbina's footsteps, Mr. Krivenko gives figures for the

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these 24 husbandmen there are both types. Judge for yourselves what kind of "science" will result if we lump together agricultural labourers and husbandmen who employ labourers, and operate with the general average!

* The fluctuation in the average size of family is much less: a) 7.83 persons, b) 8.36 persons, and c) 5.28 persons per family.

expenditure on personal consumption among the various legal categories of peasants: for example, the annual expenditure per person on vegetable food among the former state peasants is 13.4 rubles, and among the former landlords' peasants 12.2 rubles. But if we take them according to economic categories, the figures are: a) 17.7; b) 14.5 and c) 13.1. The expenditure on meat and dairy produce per person among the former landlords' peasants is 5.2 rubles and among the former state peasants 7.7 rubles. Taken by economic categories the figures are 11.7, 5.8 and 3.6, respectively. It is obvious that calculating according to legal categories only serves to conceal these huge divergences and nothing more. It is obviously valueless for that reason. The income of the former state peasants is greater than the income of the former landlords' peasants by 53.7 per cent—says Mr. Krivenko: the general average (for the 24 budgets) is 539 rubles; and for the two categories, over 600 rubles and about 400 rubles, respectively. But if graded according to their economic conditions, the figures are a) 1,053.2 rubles, b) 473.8 rubles and c) 202.4 rubles, or a fluctuation of 10:2, and not 3:2.

"The capital value of a peasant farm among the former state peasants is 1,060 rubles, and among the former landlords' peasants 635 rubles," says Mr. Krivenko. But if we take the economic categories,* the figures are a) 1,737.91 rubles,

* The divergence is even greater in respect to agricultural implements. The average value of implements is 54.83 rubles per household. But among the well-to-do peasants

b) 786.42 rubles and c) 363.38 rubles—again a fluctuation of 10:2, and not 3:2. By dividing the "peasantry" into legal categories the author prevented himself from forming a correct judgment of the economy of this "peasantry."

If we examine the households of the various types of peasants graded according to their economic conditions, we find that the prosperous family has an average income of 1,053.2 rubles and an average expenditure of 855.86 rubles, or a net income of 197.34 rubles. The middle family has an income of 473.8 rubles and an expenditure of 471.61 rubles, or a net income of 2.19 rubles per household (and that without reckoning debts and arrears)—obviously, it can barely make ends meet: out of 11 households, five have a deficit. The farms of the lowest, or poor, group are run at a direct loss: income 202.4 rubles, expenditure 223.78 rubles, or a deficit of 21.38 rubles.* It is evident that if we were to lump these households together and strike a general average (net income—44.11 rubles) we would entirely distort the real picture. We would then overlook the fact (as Mr. Krivenko overlooked it) that all the six

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it is twice the average—111.80 rubles, and among the poor peasants only one-third the average—16.04 rubles. Among the middle peasants it is 48.44 rubles.

* It is interesting to note that the budgets of the agricultural labourers—two out of the seven poor households—are balanced without a deficit: income 99 rubles and expenditure 93.45 rubles per family. One of the labourers is fed, clothed and shod by his master.

prosperous peasants who secure a surplus employ labourers (8 in all)—a fact that reveals the character of their agricultural husbandry (they are in process of becoming farmers), which yields them a surplus and renders it almost entirely unnecessary for them to engage in subsidiary "trades." All these households taken together cover only 6.5 per cent of their budgets by trades (412 rubles out of a total of 6,319.5 rubles); moreover, these trades—as Mr. Shcherbina in one place remarks—are of such a type as "carting,"* or even "dealing in sheep," that is, trades which, far from being indicative of dependence, presuppose the exploitation of others (e.g., in the second case: the accumulated "savings" are converted into merchant *capital*). These households own four industrial establishments, which yield an income of 320 rubles (five per cent of the total).*

The husbandry of the middle peasants is of a different type: they, as we have seen, can barely make ends meet. Tillage does not cover their needs, and 19 per cent of their income is derived from so-called trades. What sort of trades these are we learn from Mr. Shcherbina's article. They are given for seven householders: only two have independent trades (tailoring and charcoal-burning): the remaining five sell their labour power ("went mowing," "works at a distillery," "does day-labouring at harvest time," "goes shepherding," "worked on the local estate"). These are already half peasants, half workers.

* See Appendix I (p. 257 of this pamphlet.—*Ed.*).

Outside occupations tear them away from their husbandry and thus undermine it completely.

As to the poor peasants, they till at an outright loss; the importance of "trades" to their budgets is still greater (accounting for 24 per cent of the income), and these trades amount almost entirely (except in the case of one householder) to the sale of their labour power.* In the case of two of them their "trades" (farm labouring) predominate, providing two-thirds of their income.

It is quite clear that what we have here is a process of complete disintegration of the small producers, the upper groups of whom are being transformed into a bourgeoisie, the lower into a proletariat. Naturally, if we take general averages we will see nothing of this and will get no idea of the economics of the countryside.

It is only because he operates with these fictitious averages that the author was able to resort to such a method as the following. To determine how these typical households compare with the general type of peasant household in the uyezd, Mr. Shcherbina groups the peasants according to the size of their allotments, and it transpires that the level of prosperity (general average) of the 24 households selected is higher by about one-third than the average in the uyezd. This calculation cannot be regarded as satisfactory, both because there is a vast divergence among these 24 households and because the classification accord-

ing to size of allotment conceals the disintegration of the peasantry: the author's thesis that the "allotments are the primary cause of the prosperity" of the peasant is absolutely incorrect. Everybody knows that the "equal" distribution of land within the village community in nowise prevents its horseless members from abandoning their land, letting it, going to work on the side and being transformed into proletarians; nor does it prevent those with many horses from renting large tracts of land and conducting big and profitable farms. If, for example, we take our 24 budgets, we find that one rich peasant, with 6 dessiatines of allotment land, secures an income of 758.5 rubles, a middle peasant, with 7.1 dessiatines of allotment land, secures an income of 391.5 rubles, and a poor peasant, with 6.9 dessiatines of allotment land, secures an income of 109.5 rubles. In general, we have seen that the ratio of the incomes of the various groups is 4:2:1; while the ratio of allotment land will be 22.1:9.2:8.5, which equals 2.6:1.08:1. This is quite natural, for we find, for example, that the rich peasants, with 22.1 dessiatines of allotment land per household, rent an additional 8.8 dessiatines each, whereas the middle peasants, though they have smaller allotments (9.2 dessiatines), rent less—7.7 dessiatines, and the poor peasants, with smaller allotments still (8.5 dessiatines), rent only 2.8 dessiatines.* And so, when Mr. Krivenko says:

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* Of course, I do not mean to say that the figures for the 24 households *alone* are enough to refute the thesis that

"Unfortunately, the figures given by Mr. Shcherbina cannot serve as an accurate criterion of the general state of affairs even in the uyezd, let alone the gubernia"—all that we can say is that they cannot serve as a criterion only when you resort to the false method of calculating general averages (a method which Mr. Krivenko should not have resorted to), but that, generally speaking, Mr. Shcherbina's figures are so inclusive and valuable that they do enable us to arrive at correct conclusions—and that if Mr. Krivenko did not do so, Mr. Shcherbina is not to blame.

The latter, for example, gives on page 197 a classification of the peasants, not according to size of allotment, but according to draught animals owned, that is, a classification on economic, not legal lines—and this classification furnishes complete grounds for asserting that the relations between the various categories of the selected 24 typical households are absolutely identical with the relations between the various economic groups throughout the uyezd.

This classification is as follows:*

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the allotments are of primary importance. But above we cited figures for several uyezds which do refute it completely.[38]

* The comparison of the 24 typical households with the categories of households for the whole uyezd has been made by the same methods Mr. Shcherbina used in comparing the average of the 24 households with the groups based on size of allotment.

Groups of householders according to number of draught animals owned	Householders		Per household		
	Number	Per cent	Head of cattle	Allotment land (dessiatines)	Rented land (dessiatines)
I. With no draught animals.	8,728	26.0	0.7	6.2	0.2
II. With 1 draught animal.	10,510	31.3	3.0	9.4	1.3
III. With 2 or 3 draught animals	11,191	33.3	6.8	13.8	3.6
IV. With 4 or more draught animals	3,152	9.4	14.3	21.3	12.3
All groups	33,581	100.0	4.4	11.2	2.5
of the 24 typical households*	Labourers		0.5	7.2	0.0
	Poor peasants		2.8	8.7	3.9
	Middle peasants		8.1	9.2	7.7
	Rich peasants		13.5	22.1	8.8
	All groups		7.2	12.2	6.6

* Two labourers (Nos. 14 and 15 of Shcherbina's budgets) have here been eliminated from the group of poor peasants, so that there are only five poor peasants.

** It must be noted in connection with this table that here too we find that the amount of rented land increases in proportion to growing prosperity, *in spite of* the increase of allotment land. Thus, the facts for one more uyezd confirm the falsity of the idea that the allotments are of primary importance. On the contrary, we find that the proportion of allotment land to the total holding of a given group diminishes as the prosperity of the group increases. Totalling allotment land and rented land, and calculating the per-

Average size of family (persons)	Percentage of households					
	With hired labourers	With trade or industrial establishments	Without a house	With no working member	Cultivating no land	Without implements
4.6	0.6	4.0	9.5	16.6	41.6	98.5
5.7	1.4	5.4	1.4	4.9	2.9	2.5
7.7	8.3	12.3	0.4	1.3	0.4	—
11.2	25.3	34.2	0.1	0.4	0.3	—
6.7	5.7	10.0	3.0	6.3	11.9	23.4
4.5						
5.6						
8.3						
7.8						
7.3**						

centage of allotment land to the total, we obtain the following figures by groups: I) 96.8 per cent; II) 85.0 per cent; III) 79.3 per cent; IV) 63.3 per cent. And this is quite natural. We know that with the emancipation reform, land in Russia became a commodity. Whoever has money can always purchase land; and allotment land too must be purchased. It is obvious that the prosperous peasants concentrate land in their hands, and that this concentration is most marked in the case of rented land because of the medieval restrictions on the transfer of allotments. The "friends of the people," who favour these restrictions, do not realize that this senseless reactionary measure only worsens the condi-

There cannot be the slightest doubt that by and large the 24 typical households are superior to the general run of peasant household in the uyezd. But if instead of these fictitious averages we take economic categories, a comparison becomes possible.

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tion of the poor peasants: the impoverished peasants who possess no agricultural implements are obliged to let their land in any case and any prohibition on such letting (or sale) will lead either to land being let secretly, and, consequently, on worse terms for those who let it, or to the poor peasants surrendering their land for nothing to the "village community," i.e., again to the kulak.

I cannot refrain from quoting a profoundly true comment made by Hourwich on this vaunted "inalienability":

"To see our way clearly through the question at issue, we have to discover who are the buyers of the land sold by the peasants. We have seen that only a minor portion of the quarterly lots have been purchased by merchants. As a rule, the small lots sold by the nobility are acquired by peasants only. The question at issue is thus one that has been settled as between peasants alone, and that affects neither the interests of the nobility nor those of the capitalistic class. In such cases it may well please the Russian government to throw a sop to the peasantists [Narodniks]. This *mésalliance* of oriental paternalism with some queer sort of state socialistic prohibitionism, however, would be apt to meet with opposition from the very ones who were supposed to be benefited. As the process of dissolution is obviously spreading from within, and not from without the village, inalienability of peasant land would simply mean gratuitous expropriation of the poor for the benefit of the wealthy members of the community.

"We notice that the percentage of emigrants among the quarterly possessors[39] who have enjoyed the right of alienating their land has been far greater than that among the former state peasants who live in agrarian communism: namely, in the Ranenburg district (Ryazan Gubernia) the percentage of emigrants among the former is 17, among the

We find that the labourers among the typical households are somewhat below the householders who have no draught animals, but approach them very closely. The poor householders approach very closely to the owners of one draught animal

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latter it is 9. In the Dankoff district among the former it is 12 and among the latter it is 5.

"To what is this difference due? A single concrete example will clear up the matter.

"In 1881 a small community of 5 households, former serfs of Gregoroff, emigrated from the village of Bigildino, district of Dankoff. Their land, 30 dessiatines, was sold to a rich peasant in consideration of 1,500 rubles. The emigrants could not make a living at home, and most of them were yearly labourers. (*Statistical Report*, Part II, pp. 115, 247.) According to Mr. Greegoryeff (*Emigration of the Peasants of the Gubernia of Ryazan*), 300 rubles, the price of an average peasant holding of 6 dessiatines, is sufficient to enable a peasant family to start farming in Southern Siberia. A peasant who has been absolutely ruined is thus enabled, through the sale of his lot in the communal land, to rise to the position of a farmer in the new country. Devotion to the sacred customs of forefathers would hardly be able to withstand such a temptation as this, but for the helpful right hand of the most gracious Bureaucracy.

"I shall, of course, be charged with pessimism, as I have been recently on account of my views on the emigration of the peasants. (*Severny Vestnik*, 1892, No. 5, in an article by A. Bogdanoffsky.) The usual method of reasoning followed takes some such course as this: Granted that the case is presented true to life as it actually stands, the evil consequences" (of emigration) "are nevertheless due to the present abnormal condition of the peasantry, and under normal circumstances, the objections are 'no good.' Unhappily, however, these very 'abnormal' conditions are developing spontaneously, while the creation of 'normal' conditions is beyond the jurisdiction of the well-wishers of the peasantry." (*Op. cit.*, p. 137.)[40]

(the number of cattle is less by 0.2—the poor peasants have 2.8 and the one-horse peasants 3.0—but on the other hand their total land, both allotment and rented, is somewhat more—12.6 dessiatines as against 10.7 dessiatines). The middle householders are only slightly above the householders with two or three draught animals (they have a little more cattle and a little less land), while the prosperous householders approximate to those who have four or more draught animals, being a little *below* them. We are therefore entitled to draw the conclusion that in the uyezd as a whole not less than one-tenth of the householders conduct a regular, profitable husbandry and have no need to work on the side. (Their income—it is important to note—takes the form of money, and therefore points to the commercial character of their husbandry.) To a large extent they conduct their husbandry with the help of hired workers: not less than one-fourth of all the households employ permanent labourers, and how many of them take on temporary day labourers is unknown. Further, more than half the householders in the uyezd are poor (nearly six-tenths: horseless and one-horse, 26 per cent+31.3 per cent= 57.3 per cent), who conduct their husbandry at an outright loss and who are consequently sinking into ruin and are being steadily and inexorably expropriated. They are obliged to sell their labour power; about one-fourth of the peasants already live much more by wage labour than by agriculture. The remaining are middle peasants, who manage to carry on farming somehow

or other, operating at a constant loss and eking out a livelihood by working on the side, and who, consequently, have no economic stability whatever.

I have deliberately dwelt on these figures in such detail in order to show how Mr. Krivenko distorts realities. Without stopping to think, he takes general averages and operates with them. Naturally, the result is not even a fiction but a downright falsehood. We have seen, for example, that the net income (+197.34 rubles) of one prosperous peasant (among the typical budgets) covers the deficit of *nine* poor households (—21.38× 9= —192.42), so that the rich peasants of the uyezd who constitute 10 per cent, not only cover the deficits of the poor peasants who constitute 57 per cent, but even yield a certain surplus. And Mr. Krivenko, deriving from the average budget of the 24 households a surplus of 44.14 rubles—or, deducting debts and arrears, 15.97 rubles—simply speaks of the "decline" of the middle and lower-than-middle households. Actually, one can talk of a decline only in reference, perhaps, to the middle peasants,* whereas in the case of the mass of the poor peasants we observe direct *expropriation*, accompanied, moreover, by the concentration of the means of production in the hands of a minority who own comparatively large and firmly-established husbandries.

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* And even this would scarcely be true, because decline implies a temporary and casual loss of stability, whereas the middle peasants, as we have seen, are in a state of perpetual instability, hovering on the verge of ruin.

Because he ignored this latter circumstance, the author failed to observe another very interesting feature of these budgets, namely, that they likewise prove that *the disintegration of the peasantry is creating a home market*. On the one hand, as we pass from the higher group to the lower, we observe the growing importance of income from trades (6.5 per cent, 18.8 per cent and 23.6 per cent of the total budget of the prosperous, middle and poor peasants, respectively), that is, chiefly from the sale of labour power. On the other hand, as we pass from the lower group to the higher, we observe the growing commodity (nay, more: *bourgeois*, as we have seen) character of agriculture and an increase in the proportion of produce disposed of: the total income from tillage of the categories is *a)* $\frac{3,861.7}{1,774.4}$, *b)* $\frac{3,163.8}{899.9}$, *c)* $\frac{689.9}{175.25}$. The denominator indicates the money part of the income,* which constitutes, passing from the

* A fairly complex calculation was required to arrive at the money income from tillage (Shcherbina does not give it). It was necessary to exclude from the total income from crop the income derived from straw and chaff, which, according to the author, are used as cattle feed. The author himself excludes them in Chapter XVIII, but only for the total figures for the uyezd, and not for the given 24 households. Taking his total figures, I determined the proportion of income from grain (compared with the total income from the crops, i.e., both from grain and from straw and chaff) and on this basis excluded straw and chaff in the present case. This proportion is, for rye 78.98 per cent, for wheat 72.67 per cent, for oats and barley 73.32 per cent and for millet and buckwheat 77.78 per cent. Then the amount of

higher category to the lower, 45.9 per cent, 28.3 per cent and 25.4 per cent, respectively.

We again see quite clearly that the means of production, from which the expropriated peasants are being divorced, are becoming converted *into capital.*

It is quite obvious that Mr. Krivenko, using —or, rather, distorting—the material in this way, could not arrive at correct conclusions. After describing, on the basis of what he was told by a Novgorod peasant with whom he travelled in the train, the money character of peasant husbandry in those regions, he was forced to draw the correct conclusion that it is precisely this circumstance, namely, commodity production, that "cultivates" "special abilities" and gives rise to one preoccupation, namely, "to get it (the hay) mown as cheaply as possible" and "sell it as dear as possible" (p. 156).* This serves as a "school" which "awakens" (quite true!) "and refines commercial gifts." "Talents come to the fore from whom spring the Kolupayevs, the Derunovs and the other types of bloodsuckers,** while the

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grain sold was determined by excluding the amount consumed by the household itself.

* "The worker must be hired cheap and the most made out of him"—Mr. Krivenko quite rightly remarks in the same passage.

** Mr. Yuzhakov, how's this! Here is your colleague saying that "talented people" become "bloodsuckers," whereas you assured us that people become so only because they have "uncritical minds." That won't do, gentlemen, contradicting each other like this in one and the same magazine!

simplehearted and simple-minded fall behind, deteriorate, become impoverished and pass into the ranks of the labourers" (p. 156).

The figures for a gubernia in which entirely different conditions prevail—an agricultural gubernia (Voronezh)—lead to exactly the same conclusions. The matter, it would appear, is quite clear: we get a distinct picture of a system of commodity production as the main background of the economic life of the country in general and of the "community" "peasantry" in particular; we also get a picture of the *fact* that this commodity production, *and it alone*, is splitting the "people" and the "peasantry" into a proletariat (they become impoverished and pass into the ranks of the labourers) and a bourgeoisie (bloodsuckers), i.e., is being transformed into capitalist production. But the "friends of the people" never dare look *realities* in the face and call a spade a spade (that would be too "harsh")! And Mr. Krivenko argues as follows:

"Some consider this state of affairs quite natural" (he should have added: a quite natural consequence of the capitalist character of the relations of production. That would have been an accurate description of the views of the "some"; it would then have been impossible for him to evade these views with the help of empty phrases and he would have had to analyze them in substance. When the author was not deliberately setting out to combat these "some," he himself had to admit that money economy is the "school" that produces "talented" bloodsuckers and "simple-

hearted" labourers) "and regard it as the ineluctable mission of capitalism." (Well, of course! To believe that it is this "school" and the "bloodsuckers" who dominate it together with their administrative and intellectual lackeys that must be fought, is to consider capitalism ineluctable! But to leave the capitalist "school" and the bloodsuckers intact and to want to avoid its capitalist products by means of liberal half-measures is to be a true "friend of the people"!) "We look at the matter somewhat differently. Capitalism undoubtedly does play an important part here, as we pointed out above" (this refers to the remark about the school of bloodsuckers and the labourers), "but it cannot be said that its role is so all-embracing and decisive that there are no other factors in the changes that are taking place in the national economy, and that the future holds out no other solution" (p. 160).

There you are! Instead of giving a frank and accurate description of the present system, instead of giving a definite answer to the question why "the peasantry" is splitting into bloodsuckers and labourers, Mr. Krivenko tries to get away with meaningless phrases. "It cannot be said that the role of capitalism is decisive." Why, that is the whole question: can it be said, or can it not?

If you wanted to uphold your opinion, you should have indicated what other factors are "decisive," what other "solution" there can be besides the one indicated by the Social-Democrats, name-

ly, a class struggle of the proletariat against the bloodsuckers.* But no indications are given. Unless, perhaps, the author regards the following as an indication? Amusing as that would be, you can expect anything from the "friends of the people."

"The first to fall into decline, as we have seen, are the weak households with little land"—namely, allotments of less than five dessiatines. "But the typical households of the state peasants, with allotments of 15.7 dessiatines, are distinguished for their stability. . . . True, to secure such an income (a net income of 80 rubles) they rent an additional five dessiatines, but that only shows how much they need."

What does this "amendment," which adds to capitalism the notorious "land hunger," amount to? Only to this, that those who have little lose the little they have, while those who have much (15.7 dessiatines each) acquire still more.** But, then, this is merely a paraphrase of the statement that some

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* If the idea of the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie appears for the present to be accessible only to the urban factory workers, and not to the rural "simplehearted and simple-minded" labourers, that is, if it seems accessible only to the people who have lost these charming qualities, which are so closely associated with the "century-old traditions" and the "communal spirit"—it only goes to prove the correctness of the theory of the Social-Democrats that the work of Russian capitalism is progressive and revolutionary.

** Not to mention the absurdity of the idea that peasants with equal allotments are equal in status and are not also divided into "bloodsuckers" and "labourers."

sink into ruin while others grow rich!! It is high time to abandon this meaningless talk about land hunger, which explains nothing (because the peasants are not given allotments free but have to buy them), but only describes a process, and moreover describes it inaccurately, because one should not speak about the land alone, but about the means of production in general, and not say that the peasants have "little" of them, but that they are being *freed* from them, are being *expropriated* by growing capitalism. "We have no intention of saying," Mr. Krivenko remarks, concluding his philosophical disquisition, "that agriculture must and can, under all circumstances, remain 'natural' and separated from manufacturing industry" (another phrase! Was it not you who were just obliged to admit that a school of money economy already exists, which presumes exchange and, consequently, the separation of agriculture from manufacturing industry? Why again this sloppy talk of what can be and what should be?); "all we say is that to create a separate industry artificially is irrational" (it would be interesting to know: is the industry of the Kimry and Pavlovo handicraftsmen "separate," and who "artificially created" it, and how and when?), "and that the divorcement of the worker from the land and the implements of production is being effected not by capitalism alone, but also by other factors that preceded and furthered it."

Here most likely he again had in mind the profound idea that if the worker is divorced from the land, which passes into the hands of the blood-

sucker, this happens because the former has "little" and the latter "much" land.

And philosophers of this kind chide the Social-Democrats with "narrowness" for regarding capitalism as the decisive factor! . . . I have dwelt once *more in such detail on the disintegration* of the peasants and handicraftsmen just because it was necessary to bring out clearly how the Social-Democrats picture the matter and how they explain it. It was necessary to show that the very facts which mean to the subjective sociologist that the peasants have "grown poor," while the "money chasers" and "bloodsuckers" "derive profits for their own advantage," mean, from the standpoint of the materialist, the bourgeois disintegration of the commodity producers, a disintegration which is necessarily brought about by commodity production itself. It was necessary to show what facts serve as the basis for the thesis (adduced above in Part I)* that the struggle between the propertied and the propertyless is going on everywhere in Russia, not only in the mills and factories, but even in the most remote villages, and that everywhere this struggle is a struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, which arise out of commodity production. The disintegration of our peasants and handicraftsmen, the fact that they are being "de-peasantized," which may be depicted accurately thanks to such admirable material as the Zemstvo statistics, furnish *factual* proof that it is the Social-Democratic conception of Russian realities that is true, the conception

* See p. 93.—*Ed.*

that the peasant and handicraftsman are *small producers* in the "categorical" meaning of the term, that is, that they are *petty bourgeois*. This thesis may be regarded as the central point of the theory of **WORKING-CLASS SOCIALISM**, in contradistinction to the old peasant Socialism, which understood neither the conditions of commodity production in which the small producers live, nor their capitalist disintegration as a result of these conditions. And, therefore, whoever wanted to criticize Social-Democracy seriously should have concentrated his argument on this, and have shown that from the standpoint of political economy Russia does not represent a system of commodity production, that this is not the cause of the disintegration of the peasantry, and that the expropriation of the mass of the population and the exploitation of the toiler can be attributed to something else than the bourgeois, capitalist organization of our social (including peasant) economy.

Well, just try it, gentlemen!

There is another reason why I preferred to take the data on peasant and handicraft production to illustrate the Social-Democratic theory. It would be a departure from the materialist method, were I, when criticizing the views of the "friends of the people," to confine myself to contrasting their ideas with the Marxist ideas. One must in addition explain the "Narodnik" ideas, demonstrate their **MATERIAL** foundation in our present economic relations of society. Illustrations and examples of the economy of our peasants and kustars show the nature of this "peasant" whose ideologists the "friends of

the people" would fain be. They demonstrate the bourgeois character of our rural economy and thus confirm the correctness of classing the "friends of the people" as petty-bourgeois ideologists. But this is not all; they also show that there is the closest connection between the ideas and programs of our radicals and the interests of the petty bourgeoisie. It is this connection, which will become even clearer after a detailed examination of their program, that explains why these radical ideas are so widespread in our "society"; it also admirably explains the political servility of the "friends of the people" and their readiness for compromise.

There was, lastly, one other reason for dwelling in such detail on the economics precisely of those sides of our social life where capitalism is least developed and from which the Narodniks usually drew the material for their theories. A study and description of these economics was the simplest way to reply in substance to one of the most widespread objections to Social-Democracy current among our public. Basing themselves on the usual idea that capitalism contradicts the "popular system," and perceiving that the Social-Democrats regard large-scale capitalism as progressive, that it is precisely on large-scale capitalism that they want to rely in combating the present robber regime—our radicals, without more ado, accuse the Social-Democrats of ignoring the interests of the mass of the peasant population, of desiring "to put every muzhik through the factory melting pot," etc.

All these arguments are based on the strange and astonishingly illogical method of judging capi-

talism by what it really is, and the countryside by what it "might be." Naturally, there could be no better reply to this than to show them the *real* countryside and its *real* economy.

Anybody who studies these economics dispassionately and scientifically will be bound to admit that rural Russia consists of a system of small, disunited markets (or small branches of a central market), which regulate the social and economic life of small separate districts. And in each of these districts we find all the phenomena that are in general inherent in the economic organization of society, whose regulator is the market; we find the disintegration of the once equal, patriarchal direct producers into rich and poor; we find the rise of *capital*, especially of merchant capital, which spins its web around the toiler and sucks the lifeblood out of him. When you compare the descriptions of peasant economy given by our radicals with the precise first-hand data on rural economic life, you are astonished at the absence of any place in the system of views we are criticizing for that mass of small traders who swarm in each of these markets, all these higglers and chafferers, or whatever else they are called by the peasants in different localities, all this mass of petty exploiters who dominate the markets and ruthlessly oppress the toiler. They are usually simply brushed aside with the remark—"These are no longer peasants, but traders." Yes, you are quite right: these are "no longer peasants." But try to treat as a distinct group all these "traders," that is, speaking in the precise language of political economy, those who conduct a commercial

enterprise and who appropriate, to whatever extent, the labour of others; try to express in precise figures the economic strength of this group and the part it plays in the general economic life of the district; and then try to treat as an opposite group all those who also are "no longer peasants" because they bring their labour power to the market, because they work not for themselves but for others—try to fulfil these elementary requisites of a dispassionate and serious inquiry and you will get such a vivid picture of bourgeois disintegration that nothing but a memory will remain of the "popular system" myth. This mass of small rural exploiters represents a terrible force, especially terrible because they oppress the toiler separately, individually, because they fetter the toiler to themselves and deprive him of all hope of salvation; terrible because this exploitation, in view of the barbaric state of rural life caused by the low productivity of labour characteristic of the system we are describing and by the absence of communications, consists not only of the robbery of labour but also of Asiatic degradation of human dignity which we constantly encounter in rural life. Now, if you compare this *real* countryside with our capitalism you will understand why the Social-Democrats regard the work of our capitalism as progressive when it draws these small, disunited markets together into one nation-wide market, when, in place of the legion of small well-meaning bloodsuckers, it creates a handful of big "pillars of the fatherland," when it socializes labour and raises its productivity, when it rends the bonds of subjugation of the toiler to the local bloodsuckers and subju-

gates him to large-scale *capital*. The latter subjugation is progressive compared with the former—despite all the horrors of the oppression of labour, despite the gradual extinction and brutalization, despite the crippling of the female and child organism, etc.—because it **AWAKENS THE MIND OF THE WORKER**, converts dumb and incoherent discontent into conscious protest, converts disunited, scattered and senseless revolt into an organized class struggle for the emancipation of all the toiling folk, a struggle which derives its strength from the very conditions of existence of this large-scale capitalism, and therefore may assuredly count upon **CERTAIN SUCCESS**.

In reply to the accusation of ignoring the mass of the peasantry, Social-Democrats would be quite justified in quoting the words of Karl Marx:

> "*Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers which adorned the chain, not that man should wear his fetters denuded of fanciful embellishment, but that he should throw off the chain and reach for the living flower.*"[41]

The Russian Social-Democrats are plucking from our countryside the imaginary flowers that adorn it, they are combating idealizations and fantasies and are performing the destructive work for which they are so mortally detested by the "friends of the people," not in order that the mass of the peasantry should remain in their present state of oppression, gradual extinction and enslavement, but in order that the proletariat may understand

what are the chains that everywhere fetter the toiler, that it may understand how these chains are forged, and be able to rise against them, throw them off and reach out for the real flower.

When they bring this idea to the representatives of the toiling class who by their status are alone capable of acquiring class consciousness and of commencing a class struggle, they are accused of wanting to put the muzhik through the factory melting pot.

And who are the accusers?

People who themselves base their hopes for the emancipation of the toiler on the "government" and on "society," that is, on the organs of that very bourgeoisie which has everywhere fettered the toiler!

And these slugs have the puffed-up assurance to say that the Social-Democrats have no ideals!

Let us now pass to the political program of the "friends of the people," to whose theoretical views we have, we think, devoted too much time already. By what means do they propose to "put out the fire"? What way out do they propose in place of the one, which they claim is wrong, proposed by the Social-Democrats?

"The reorganization of the Peasants' Bank," says Mr. Yuzhakov in an article entitled "The Ministry of Agriculture" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 10), "the establishment of a Colonization Department, the regulation of state land leasing in the interest

of popular husbandry . . . the study and regulation of land-letting—such is the program for restoring popular husbandry and for protecting it from the economic violence" (*sic*!) "of the rising plutocracy." And in an article entitled "Problems of Economic Development" this program for "restoring popular husbandry" is supplemented by the following "first, but essential steps": "Removal of all hindrances that now encumber the village community; its release from tutelage, adoption of common tillage (the socialization of agriculture) and the development of the communal working up of the raw materials that are obtained from the soil." And Messrs. Krivenko and Karyshev add: "Cheap credit, cooperative farming, an assured market, the possibility of dispensing with entrepreneurs' profits (this is dealt with separately below), the invention of cheaper engines and other technical improvements," and, finally, "museums, warehouses, commission agencies."

Examine this program and you will find that these gentlemen wholly and completely take their stand on modern society (i.e., the capitalist system, although they do not realize it), only they want to mend and patch it up, and fail to understand that all their progressive measures—cheap credit, improved technique, banks, and so on—can only serve to strengthen and develop the bourgeoisie.

Nik. —on is quite right, of course, when he says—and this is one of his most valuable theses, against which the "friends of the people" could not help protesting—that no reforms under the present

system are of any use, and that credit, colonization, fiscal reform, the transfer of all the land to the peasants, will not appreciably change anything, but, on the contrary, will only serve to strengthen and develop capitalist production, which at present is being retarded by excessive "tutelage," the survivals of serf dues, the fact that the peasantry is tied to the land, etc. Economists, he says, who, like Prince Vasilchikov (an undoubted "friend of the people" in his ideas), want the extensive development of credit, want the same thing as the "liberal," i.e., bourgeois, economists, and "strive for the development and consolidation of capitalist relations." They do not understand the antagonism within our relations of production (within the "peasantry" as within the other estates), and instead of striving to bring this antagonism out into the open, instead of frankly taking sides with those who are enslaved as a result of this antagonism and trying to help them rise up and fight, they dream of terminating the struggle by measures that would satisfy everybody and reconcile and unite all. The result of all these measures is naturally a foregone conclusion: we have only to recall the examples of disintegration given above to convince ourselves that all these credits,* improvements, banks and

* This idea—of utilizing credit to foster the "popular husbandry," i.e., the husbandry of small producers, under capitalist relations (whose existence the "friends of the people," as we have already seen, can no longer deny)—this absurd idea, which reveals an utter failure to understand the elementary truths of theoretical political economy, very clearly shows how vulgar is the theory advanced by these gentlemen who try to sit between two stools.

similar "progressive" measures can benefit only those who, with well-managed and well-established farms at their disposal, have certain "savings," in other words, the representatives of the insignificant minority, the petty bourgeoisie. And however much you reorganize the Peasants' Bank and similar institutions, you will not in the least alter the fundamental and cardinal fact that the mass of the population have been expropriated and continue to be expropriated, for they lack even means of subsistence, let alone means for farming on proper lines.

The same must be said of "artels," and "common tillage." Mr. Yuzhakov called the latter "the socialization of agriculture." This is simply funny, of course, because socialization entails the organization of production on a wider scale than the limits of a single village, and because it entails the expropriation of the "bloodsuckers" who have monopolized the means of production and who now rule Russian social economy. And this requires struggle, struggle and struggle, and not empty philistine moralizing.

And for this reason these measures of theirs are transformed into mild, liberal half-measures, dependent on the generosity of the philanthropic bourgeois measures which do much more harm by diverting the exploited from the struggle than the good that might accrue from possible improvements in the position of a few individuals which cannot but be paltry and precarious on the general basis of capitalist relations. The preposterous extent to which these gentlemen gloss over the antagonisms

in Russian life—done, of course, with the very best intentions in order to put an end to the present struggle; in other words, the sort of intentions with which the road to hell is paved—is shown by the following argument advanced by Mr. Krivenko:

"The intelligentsia direct the manufacturers' enterprises, and they could direct popular industry."

The whole of their philosophy reduces itself to bewailing the fact that there is conflict and exploitation, but that these "might" not be if . . . if there were no exploiters. For what did the author mean by this absurd phrase? Can it be denied that year after year the Russian universities and other educational establishments turn out a brand of "intelligentsia" (??) whose only concern is to find someone to feed them? Can it be denied that today, in Russia, the means for maintaining this "intelligentsia" are owned only by the bourgeois minority? Will the bourgeois intelligentsia in Russia disappear because the "friends of the people" say that they "might" serve somebody else, not the bourgeoisie? Yes, they "might," *if* they were not a bourgeois intelligentsia. They "might" not be a bourgeois intelligentsia, "if" there were no bourgeoisie and no capitalism in Russia! And these people spend their whole lives speculating on "ifs" and "ans." What is more, these gentlemen not only refuse to attach decisive importance to capitalism, but in general refuse to see anything wrong in it. If certain "defects" were removed, they would perhaps not fare so badly under it. How do you like the following statement by Mr. Krivenko:

"Capitalist production and the capitalization of the trades are by no means gates through which manufacturing industry can only depart from the people. It can depart, of course, but it can also enter the life of the people and come into closer proximity to agriculture and the extractive industries. This can be contrived in various ways, and these gates, as well as others, can serve this purpose" (p. 161). Mr. Krivenko has a number of very good qualities—as compared with Mr. Mikhailovsky; for example, frankness and straightforwardness. Where Mr. Mikhailovsky would have filled reams with smooth and glib sentences, wriggling around the subject without ever touching it, the businesslike and practical Mr. Krivenko hits straight from the shoulder, and without any qualms of conscience spreads before the reader all the absurdities of his views without reservation. "Capitalism can enter the life of the people"—if you please! That is, capitalism is possible without the toilers being divorced from the means of production! This is positively delightful! At least, we now have a clear idea of what the "friends of the people" want. They want commodity production without capitalism—capitalism without expropriation and without exploitation, with nothing but a petty bourgeoisie peacefully vegetating under the wing of humane landlords and liberal administrators. And, with the serious mien of a departmental official who intends to confer a boon on Russia, they set out to contrive schemes under which the wolves will have full bellies and the sheep whole skins. To get some idea of the character of these schemes we must turn to the article by the

same author ("Our Cultural Freelances") in No. 12: "The artel and state form of industry," argues Mr. Krivenko—apparently under the impression that he has already been "called" to "solve practical economic problems"—"is by no means all that can be offered in the present instance. For example, the following scheme is possible. . . ." And he goes on to relate how an engineer visited the offices of the *Russkoye Bogatstvo* with a plan for the technical exploitation of the Don Region by a joint-stock company with shares in small denominations (not more than 100 rubles per share). The author was recommended to modify his scheme roughly as follows: "That the shares shall not belong to private persons, but to village communities; that the part of the village population who are employed in the enterprises of the company shall receive ordinary wages, the village communities guaranteeing that their connection with the land will be maintained."

What administrative genius, is it not? With what admirable simplicity and ease capitalism is introduced into the life of the people and all its pernicious attributes eliminated! All that is required is that the rural rich should buy shares* through the village communities and receive

* I say the rich will buy the shares, despite the author's stipulation that the shares are to be owned by the village communities, because, after all, he speaks of the purchase of shares for money, and only the rich have money. Hence, whether the business is conducted through the agency of the village communities or not, only the rich will be able to pay, just as the purchase or renting of land by the community in no way prevents the rich from monopolizing this

dividends from the enterprise, in which a "part of the population" will be employed and their connection with the land guaranteed—a "connection" insufficient to assure a livelihood from the land (otherwise who would go to work for "ordinary wages"?), but sufficient to tie a man to his locality, enslave him to the local capitalist enterprise and deprive him of the possibility of changing masters. I say master, capitalist, advisedly, for he who pays the toiler *wages* cannot be called anything else.

Perhaps the reader is already vexed with me for dealing at such length with nonsense like this, which would seem to be undeserving of any attention at all. But I beg leave to say that although it is nonsense, it is a type of nonsense that is useful and necessary to study, because it reflects the social and economic relations that actually exist in Russia and, as a consequence, is one of those social ideas which are very widespread in our country and with which Social-Democrats will have to reckon for a long time to come. The point is that the transition from the serf, feudal mode of production to the

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land. The dividends too must go to those who paid—otherwise the shares will not be shares. And I understand the author's proposal to mean that a certain part of the profits will be earmarked for "guaranteeing the workers their connection with the land." If the author does not mean this (although it inevitably follows from what he says), but that the rich shall pay for the shares and not receive dividends, then all his scheme amounts to is that the rich shall share with the poor. This reminds one of the anecdote about the flykiller which requires that you first catch the fly and put it in the dish—and it will instantly die.

capitalist mode of production in Russia gave rise, and to some extent still continues to give rise, to a situation for the toilers in which the peasant, being unable to obtain a livelihood from the land and to *pay dues for it to the landlord* (and *he has to pay them to this very day*), was compelled to seek "outside earnings," which at first, in the good old days, took the form either of some independent trade (for example, carting), or of some trade which was not independent but which, owing to the extremely undeveloped state of the trades, was comparatively well paid. This assured the peasantry a certain relative prosperity compared with today, the prosperity of the serf, who peacefully vegetated under the tutelage of a hundred thousand noble police officers and of the rising assemblers of the land of Russia—the *bourgeoisie*.

And the "friends of the people" idealize this system, simply close their eyes to its dark sides, dream about it—"dream," because it has long ceased to exist, has long been destroyed by capitalism, which has given rise to the wholesale expropriation of the peasant husbandmen and has transformed the former "earnings" into the unbridled exploitation of "hands," of which there is a surplus supply.

Our petty-bourgeois knights want to preserve the peasant's "connection" with the land; but they do not want the serfdom that alone was able to guarantee this connection, and that was broken only by commodity production and capitalism, which made this connection impossible. They want outside employments for the peasant which would not

divorce him from the land, and which—while work is done for the market—would not give rise to competition, would not create *capital* and would not enslave the mass of the population to it. True to the subjective method in sociology, they want to "take" what is best from here and from there; but actually, of course, this childish desire can only lead to reactionary dreams which ignore realities, to an inability to understand and utilize the really progressive and revolutionary side of the new system, and to sympathy for measures which perpetuate the good old system of semiserf, semifree labour—a system which is replete with all the horrors of exploitation and oppression, and holds out no possibility of escape.

To prove the correctness of this explanation, which classes the "friends of the people" among the reactionaries, I shall quote two examples.

The Moscow Zemstvo statistics give a description of the farm of a certain Madame K. (in the Podolsk Uyezd), which (the farm, not the description) aroused the admiration both of the Moscow statisticians and of Mr. V. V., if my memory does not deceive me (he wrote about it, I think, in a magazine article).

Madame K.'s much lauded farm was regarded by Mr. V. Orlov as "convincing practical confirmation" of his favourite thesis that "where peasant husbandry is in sound condition, there the private landowners' farms are also conducted better." From Mr. Orlov's account of this lady's estate, it appears that she runs her farm with the help of the labour of the local peasants, who till her land in

return for flour, etc., which she loans them in the winter. The lady is extraordinarily kind to these peasants and helps them, so that they are now the most solvent in the volost and have enough grain "to last them almost until the new harvest (formerly, it did not even last until St. Nicholas' day in winter)."

The question arises, does "such an arrangement" preclude "the antagonism of interests of peasant and landowner," as Messrs. N. Kablukov (Vol. V, p. 175) and V. Orlov (Vol. II, pp. 55-59 and elsewhere) think?[42] Obviously not, because Madame K. lives on the labour of the peasants. Hence, exploitation is not abolished at all. Madame K. may be forgiven for failing to see the exploitation behind her kindness to the exploited, but not so an economist and statistician who, in his admiration for the case in question, takes up exactly the same stand as those Menschenfreunde* in Western Europe who go into raptures over any kindness shown by capitalist to worker, gleefully relate cases where an employer shows concern for the welfare of his workers, opens provision shops for them, supplies them with dwellings, etc. To draw the conclusion that since such "facts" exist (and are therefore "possible") there is no antagonism of interests, is to fail to see the wood for the trees. That is the first point.

The second point is that we learn from Mr. Orlov's account that Madame K.'s peasants, "thanks to excellent crops (the landlady gave them good seed), have acquired livestock" and have "solvent"

* Philanthropists.—*Tr.*

farms. Let us assume that these "solvent husbandmen" have become not "almost," but completely solvent, and that not only the "majority," but all of them have enough grain, not "almost" until, but quite until the new harvest. Let us assume that these peasants now have enough land, and that they have "cattle runs and pastures"—which they have not got at present (fine solvency!), having to rent them from Madame K. and to pay in labour. Does Mr. Orlov really believe that then—that is, if the peasants' husbandry were really solvent—these peasants would agree to "perform all the work on Madame K.'s estate as thoroughly, punctually and expeditiously," as they do now? Or perhaps gratitude to the kind mistress who sweats the life out of these solvent peasants with such maternal care will be a no less potent incentive than the present hopeless condition of the peasants, who, after all, cannot dispense with pastures and cattle runs?

Evidently, the "friends of the people" virtually think along the same lines: as true petty-bourgeois ideologists, they do not want to abolish exploitation, but to mitigate it, they do not want conflict, but conciliation. Their broad ideas, from the standpoint of which they so vigorously lambast the narrow-minded Social-Democrats, do not go beyond a "solvent" peasant who will perform his "duties" to the landlords and capitalists, as long as the landlords and capitalists treat him fairly.

Take the other example. Mr. Yuzhakov, in his fairly well-known article, "Norms of Popular Land-

ownership in Russia" (*Russkaya Mysl*, 1885, No. 9), expounded his views on what should be the dimensions of "popular" landownership, i.e., in the terminology of our liberals, such as would exclude capitalism and exploitation. Now, after the excellent explanation given by Mr. Krivenko, we know that he too regarded things from the standpoint of the "introduction of capitalism into the life of the people." As the minimum for "popular" landownership, he took such allotments as would cover "cereal food and payments,"* while the rest, he says, could be obtained by "earnings." . . . In other words, he deliberately resigned himself to a state of affairs in which the peasant, by maintaining connection with the land, is subjected to a double exploitation—partly by the landlord, on the "allotment," and partly by the capitalist, when working for his "earnings." This condition of the small producer, who is subjected to a double exploitation, and whose conditions of life, moreover, are such as inevitably to breed a humble and cowed spirit which kills all hope that the oppressed class will even fight, let alone be victorious—this semi-

* To show the relation between these outlays and the remaining part of the peasants' budget, I will quote again the 24 budgets of the Ostrogozhsk Uyezd. The average expenditure per family is 495.39 rubles (in kind and in money). Of this, 109.10 rubles goes to maintain cattle, 135.80 rubles is spent on vegetable food and on taxes, and the remaining 250.49 rubles on other expenses—non-vegetable food, clothes, implements, rent, etc. Mr. Yuzhakov puts the maintenance of cattle to the account of the hay fields and auxiliary pastures.

medieval condition is the nec plus ultra of the outlook and ideals of the "friends of the people." And when capitalism, which developed with tremendous rapidity throughout the whole post-Reform history of Russia, began to uproot this pillar of old Russia —the patriarchal, semiserf peasantry—to drag the peasants out of these medieval and semifeudal conditions and to put them into modern, purely capitalist conditions compelling them to abandon their ancient habitations and wander over the face of Russia in search of employment, breaking the chains of enslavement to the local "work provider" and disclosing the basis of exploitation in general, of class exploitation as distinct from the depredations of any particular viper—when capitalism began to draw the rest of the peasant population, which had been reduced to the cowed and degraded condition of cattle, en masse into the vortex of social and political life, with all its growing complexities, then our knights began to lament and bemoan the fall and collapse of the old pillars. And they continue to lament and bemoan the good old times to this day, although one would think that now only the blind can fail to see the revolutionary side of this new mode of life, can fail to see how capitalism is creating a new social force, which has no ties with the old regime of exploitation and which is in a position to fight it.

The "friends of the people," however, show no trace of a desire for any radical change in the present system. They are entirely satisfied with liberal measures on the existing basis, and in the invention of such measures Mr. Krivenko really dis-

plays the administrative abilities of a home-grown Pompadour.[43]

"Generally speaking"—he says, urging the necessity for "a detailed study and radical transformation" of "our popular industry"—"this question calls for special investigation, and for the division of industries into those that can be applied to the life of the people" (*sic*!!) "and those which would encounter serious obstacles in such an application."

Mr. Krivenko himself gives an example of such a division when he divides the various trades into those which are not becoming capitalistic, those which have already become capitalistic, and those which can "contend with large-scale industry for existence."

"In the first case," this administrator decides, "small-scale production can exist freely"—but can it be free of the market, whose fluctuations disintegrate the small producers into bourgeoisie and proletariat? Can it be free of the expansion of the local markets and their amalgamation into a big market? Can it be free of the progress of technique? Or perhaps this progress of technique—under commodity production—need not be capitalistic? In the last case, the author demands the "organization of production on a large scale too": "Clearly," he says, "what is required here is the organization of production on a large scale too, fixed and circulating capital, machinery, etc., or something else that will counterbalance these conditions: cheap credit, the elimination of superfluous middlemen, cooperative farming and the possibility of dispensing

with entrepreneurs' profits, an assured market, the invention of cheaper engines and other technical improvements, or, finally, a certain reduction in wages, provided it is compensated by other benefits."

This sort of reasoning is highly characteristic of the "friends of the people," with their broad ideals in words and their stereotyped liberalism in action. As you see, our philosopher starts out from nothing more nor less than the possibility of dispensing with entrepreneurs' profits and the organization of large-scale production. Excellent: this is **EXACTLY** what the Social-Democrats want. But how do the "friends of the people" want to achieve it? To organize large-scale production without entrepreneurs, it is necessary first of all to abolish the commodity system of social economy and to replace it by the communal, communist system, under which production would not be regulated by the market, as it is at present, but by the producers themselves, by the society of workers itself, and under which the means of production would not be owned by private individuals, but by the whole of society. Obviously, such a change from the private *form of appropriation* to the communal requires that *the form of production should first* be changed, that the scattered, small, isolated processes of production of small producers should be merged into a *single, social, productive process*; it requires, in a word, the very material conditions which capitalism creates. But the "friends of the people" have no intention of relying on capitalism. How then do they propose to act? They do not say. They do not even mention the abolition

of commodity production: evidently, their broad ideals are incapable of transcending the bounds of this system of social production. Moreover, to abolish entrepreneurs' profits it would be necessary to expropriate the entrepreneurs, who obtain their "profits" precisely because they have monopolized the means of production. And to expropriate these pillars of our fatherland, a popular revolutionary movement against the bourgeois regime is required, a movement of which only the working-class proletariat, which has no ties with this regime, is capable. But the "friends of the people" have no struggle in mind at all, and do not even suspect that other types of public men, apart from the administrative organs of the entrepreneurs themselves, are possible and necessary. Clearly, they have not the slightest intention of taking any serious measures against "entrepreneurs' profits." Mr. Krivenko simply allowed his tongue to run away with him. And he immediately corrected himself: why, such a thing as "the possibility of dispensing with entrepreneurs' profits" can be "counterbalanced"—"by something else," namely, credits, organized marketing, improved technique. Thus everything is arranged quite satisfactorily: instead of the abolition of the sacred right to "profits," which would be so vexatious to the entrepreneur gentry, such mild, liberal measures are proposed as would only serve to place better weapons for the struggle in the hands of capitalism, and would only strengthen, consolidate and develop our petty, "popular" bourgeoisie. And so as not to leave any doubt that it is the interests of this petty bourgeoisie alone that the "friends of the people"

champion, Mr. Krivenko adds the following remarkable explanation. It appears that the abolition of entrepreneurs' profits may be "counterbalanced" . . . "by a reduction in wages"!!! At a first glance this seems to be sheer gibberish. But, no. It is the consistent application of petty-bourgeois ideas. The author had observed a fact like the struggle between big capital and small capital, and, like the true "friend of the people" he is, he, of course, took the side of small . . . *capital*. He had further heard that one of the most powerful weapons at the disposal of the small capitalist is to reduce wages—a fact which was quite correctly observed and which has been confirmed in a large number of industries in Russia as well—in addition to lengthening the working day. And so, desiring at all cost to save the small . . . *capitalist*, he proposes "a certain reduction in wages, provided it is compensated by other benefits"! Messieurs the entrepreneurs, about whose "profits" some queer things seemed to have been said at first, need not worry a bit. In fact, I think they would be quite willing to appoint this brilliant administrator, who proposes to reduce wages as a measure *against* the entrepreneurs, to the post of Minister of Finance.

Another example could be quoted to show how the pure-blooded bourgeois peeps out of the humane and liberal administrators of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* as soon as they have to deal with any practical question. The "Chronicle of Home Affairs" in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 12, deals with the subject of monopoly.

"Monopoly and the syndicate," says the author, "such are the ideals of developed industry." And

he goes on to express his surprise that these institutions are appearing in Russia, too, although there is "no keen competition among the capitalists" here. "Neither the sugar industry nor the oil industry has developed to any great extent yet. The consumption of sugar and kerosene here is still practically in the embryo, to judge by the insignificant quantity of these goods consumed per head of the population here as compared with other countries. It would seem that the field for the development of these branches of industry is still very large and could still absorb a large amount of capital."

It is characteristic that just here, where a practical question was concerned, the author forgot the favourite idea of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* anent the shrinking of the home market. He is compelled to admit that this market still has the prospect of tremendous development, and not of shrinking. He arrives at this conclusion from a comparison with the West, where consumption is larger. Why? Because the level of culture is higher. But what is the material basis of this culture if not the development of capitalist technique, the growth of commodity production and exchange, which bring people into more frequent intercourse with each other and break down the medieval isolation of the separate localities? Was not the level of culture in France, for example, no higher than ours before the Great Revolution, when the semimedieval peasantry had not yet completely split into a rural bourgeoisie and proletariat? And if the author had examined Russian life more closely he could not have helped

noticing, for example, that in localities where capitalism is developed the requirements of the peasant population are much higher than in the purely agricultural districts. This has been noted by all investigators of our kustar trades in all cases where these have developed so far as to lay an industrial impress upon the whole life of the population.*

The "friends of the people" pay no attention to such "trifles" as this because they explain the thing "simply" by the level of culture or by the growing complexity of life generally, and do not even trouble to inquire into the material foundations of this culture and of this complexity. But if they would only examine the economics of our rural districts they would have to admit that it is precisely the disintegration of the peasantry into a bourgeoisie and a proletariat that creates the home market.

They must think that the growth of the market does not imply the growth of a bourgeoisie. "In view of the low level of development of production generally," continues the above-mentioned chronicler of home affairs, "and the lack of enterprise and initiative, monopoly will still further retard the development of the *forces of the country*." Speaking of the tobacco monopoly, the author calculates that it "would take 154,000,000 rubles out of *popular* circulation." Here the author altogether loses

* I would quote as an example the Pavlovo kustars in comparison with the peasants of the surrounding villages. See the works of Grigoryev and Annensky.[44] I again deliberately give the example of a rural district in which a specific "popular system" is supposed to exist.

sight of the fact that the basis of our economic system is commodity production, the leader of which, here as everywhere else, is the bourgeoisie. And instead of saying that monopoly hampers the bourgeoisie, he speaks about the "country," and instead of speaking about commodity, bourgeois circulation, he speaks about "popular" circulation.* A bourgeois is incapable of detecting the difference between these two terms, great as it is. To show how obvious this difference really is, I will quote a magazine which is an authority in the eyes of the "friends of the people," namely, *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*. In No. 2 of that magazine, 1872, in an article entitled "The Plutocracy and Its Foundations," we read the following:

"According to Marlo, the most important characteristic of the plutocracy is its love for a liberal form of government, or at all events for the principle of freedom of acquisition. If we take this characteristic and recall what the position was some eight or ten years ago, we shall find that as far as liberalism is concerned we have made enormous strides. . . . No matter what newspaper or magazine you take up, they all seem more or less to represent democratic principles, they are all out for the interests of the people. But side by side with these democratic views, and even under their cloak" (*mark* this), "time and again, intentionally or unintentionally, plutocratic aspirations are pursued."

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* The author must be particularly blamed for this use of terms because *Russkoye Bogatstvo* loves to use the word "popular" (*narodni—Tr.*) in contradistinction to bourgeois.

The author quotes as an example the address presented by the St. Petersburg and Moscow merchants to the Minister of Finance, expressing the gratitude of this most venerable body of the Russian bourgeoisie to him for having "founded the financial position of Russia on the widest possible expansion of private enterprise, which is alone fruitful." And the author of the article concludes: "Plutocratic elements and proclivities undoubtedly exist in our society, and in plenty."

As you see, your predecessors in the distant past, when the impressions of the great emancipatory reform (which, as Mr. Yuzhakov has discovered, should have opened up peaceful and proper paths of development for "popular" industry, but which in fact only opened up paths for the development of a plutocracy) were still vivid and fresh, had themselves to admit the plutocratic, i.e., bourgeois, character of private enterprise in Russia.

Why have you forgotten this? Why, when you talk about "popular" circulation and the development of the "forces of the country" thanks to the development of "enterprise and initiative," do you not mention the antagonistic character of this development, the exploiting character of this enterprise and initiative? Opposition can, and should, of course, be expressed to monopolies and similar institutions, for they undoubtedly worsen the condition of the toilers; but it must not be forgotten that besides all these medieval fetters the toiler is shackled by still stronger, modern, bourgeois fetters. Undoubtedly, the abolition of monopolies would be beneficial to the whole "people," because since bourgeois

production has become the basis of the economic life of the country, these survivals of the medieval system only add to the capitalist miseries still more bitter, medieval, miseries. Undoubtedly, it is absolutely essential to abolish them—and the quicker and more radically, the better—in order, by freeing bourgeois society of the semifeudal fetters it has inherited, to free the hands of the working class and facilitate its struggle against the bourgeoisie.

That is the way one should talk, calling a spade a spade—saying that the abolition of monopolies and of all the other medieval restrictions (and in Russia their name is legion) is absolutely essential for the working class in order to facilitate its struggle against the bourgeois system. That is all. Only a bourgeois can, because of the solidarity of the interests of the whole "people" in opposition to the medieval, feudal institutions, overlook the profound and irreconcilable antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat among the "people."

However, it would be absurd to think that the "friends of the people" may be put to shame by this, when, in regard to what the rural districts need, they say things like the following:

"When, a few years ago," Mr. Krivenko informs us, "certain newspapers discussed what professions and what type of intellectual people the rural districts needed, the list proved to be a very long and varied one and embraced nearly every walk of life: men and women doctors were followed by feldshers, then came lawyers, followed by teachers, librarians and booksellers, agronomists, forestry experts and agricultural experts generally, technicians of the

most varied branches (a very extensive sphere, one almost untouched as yet), organizers and managers of credit institutions, warehouses, etc."

Let us stop to consider, say, those "intellectuals" (??) whose activities directly pertain to the economic sphere, all those forestry experts, agricultural experts, technicians, etc. How these people are indeed needed in the rural districts! But B Y W H O M in the rural districts? By the landowners, of course, and by the thrifty muzhiks, who have "savings" and can afford to pay for the services of these tradesmen whom Mr. Krivenko is pleased to call "intellectuals." *These* inhabitants of the rural districts have indeed long been thirsting for technicians, for credits, for warehouses; all our economic literature testifies to this. But there are other inhabitants of the rural districts, who are much more numerous, and of whom it would not harm the "friends of the people" to think a little more often, viz., the ruined, ragged and fleeced peasants who not only have no "savings" to pay for the services of "intellectuals" but not even enough bread to save them from dying of starvation. And it is *these* inhabitants of the rural districts you want to assist by setting up *warehouses*!! What will they put in them, our one-horse and horseless peasants? Their clothes? They pawned them as far back as 1891 to the rural and urban kulaks who at that time, in accordance with your humane and liberal precept, set up regular "warehouses" in their houses, taverns, and shops. All they have left is their "hands"; but even the Russian bureaucrats have so far failed to invent "warehouses" for this sort of commodity. . . .

It would be hard to imagine more striking proof of the utter banality of these "democrats" than the way they sentimentalize about technical progress among the "peasantry," while closing their eyes to the wholesale expropriation of this very "peasantry." For example, in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 2 ("Sketches," §XII), Mr. Karyshev, with the fervour of a liberal cretin, tells of cases of "perfections and improvements" in peasant farming—of the "spread of improved sorts of seed on peasant farms," such as American oats, Vasa rye, Clydesdale oats, etc. "In some places the peasants set apart a special plot of land for seed, on which, after careful tilling, they plant by hand selected samples of grain." "Many and very varied innovations" are noted "in the sphere of improved implements and machines,"* such as cultivators, light ploughs, threshing machines, winnowing machines, seed sorters. He states that there is "a greater variety of fertilizers"—phosphates, bone manure, pigeon manure, etc. "Correspondents urge the necessity for setting up local Zemstvo stores for the sale of phosphates in the villages"—and Mr. Karyshev, quoting from Mr. V. V.'s book, *Progressive Trends in Peasant Farming* (Mr. Krivenko also refers to this book), is affected by all this progress almost to the point of fervour:

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* I remind the reader how these improved implements are distributed in the Novo-Uzensk Uyezd: 37 per cent of the peasants (the poor), or 10,000 out of 28,000 households, have 7 implements out of 5,724, that is, one-eighth of one per cent! Four-fifths of the implements are monopolized by the rich, who represent only one-fourth of the total number of households.

"These reports, which we have been able to give only in brief, make a heartening and at the same time saddening impression. . . . Heartening, because these people, impoverished, debt-laden, very many of them without horses, work with incessant industry, do not give way to despair, do not change their occupation, but remain true to the land, realizing that in the land, if it is properly treated, lies their future, their strength, their wealth." (Why, of course, it goes without saying that it is just the impoverished and horseless muzhik who buys phosphates, seed sorters, threshing machines and Clydesdale oat seed! O, sancta simplicitas! And this is not written by a high-school girl, but by a professor, a Doctor of Political Economy!! No, say what you like, it can't all be due to holy simplicity.) "They are feverishly searching for the way to treat it properly, searching for new ways, methods of cultivation, seed, implements, fertilizers, everything that will lend fertility to the soil that feeds them and that will sooner or later reward them a hundredfold. . . .* Saddening because" (perhaps

* You are profoundly right, worthy Mr. Professor, when you say that improved methods of farming will reward *a hundredfold* the "people" who do not "give way to despair" and "remain true to the land." But have you not observed, O puissant Doctor of Political Economy, that to acquire all these phosphates and so on, the "muzhik" must stand out from the mass of the starving poor in having *spare* money—and money, after all, is a product of *social* labour which has passed into private hands; that the appropriation of the "reward" for improved farming will be the appropriation of *other people's* labour; and that only the most contemptible hangers-on of the bourgeoisie can think that, the

you think that here at least this "friend of the people" mentions the wholesale expropriation of the peasantry that accompanies and calls forth the concentration of the land in the hands of the thrifty muzhiks, its conversion into *capital*, the basis of *improved* farming—the expropriation that throws on the market "free" and "cheap" "hands," which create the success of native "enterprise" with the aid of all these threshing machines, seed sorters and winnowing machines?—Nothing of the kind!), "because . . . it is we ourselves who must be roused. Where is the aid we should be giving to the muzhik who is striving to improve his farming? We have at our disposal science, literature, museums, warehouses, commission agencies." (That is exactly how he puts them, gentlemen, side by side: "science" and "commission agencies." . . . The time to study the "friends of the people" is not when they are fighting the Social-Democrats, because on such occasions they don a uniform sewn from tatters of the "ideals of their fathers," but in their everyday clothes, when they are discussing in detail the affairs of everyday life. Then you get the full colour and flavour of these petty-bourgeois ideologists.) "Has the muzhik anything like it? Of course, he has the rudiments of them, but somehow they are developing very slowly. The muzhik wants an example—where are our experiment fields, our model farms? The muzhik is seeking the printed word—where is our popular literature on agronomics? . . . The

source of this abundant reward is the personal effort of the husbandman, who "works with incessant industry," "fertilizing the soil that feeds him"?

muzhik is seeking fertilizer, implements, seed—where are our Zemstvo stores for the sale of these things, wholesale buying, purchasing and distributing conveniences? . . . Where are you, men of affairs, private and Zemstvo? Go and work, the time for it has long arrived, and

> *Hearty thanks will be your meed*
> *From the Russian people!*"[45]
>
> N. Karyshev (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 2, p. 19).

Here you have them, these friends of the petty "popular" bourgeois, revelling in their philistine progress!

One would think that, even apart from an analysis of our rural economy, it is enough to observe this striking fact in our modern economic history—namely, the generally-admitted progress in peasant husbandry, parallel with the expropriation of the "peasantry" on a tremendous scale—to become convinced of the absurdity of picturing the "peasantry" as an intrinsically united and homogeneous whole, to become convinced of the bourgeois character of all this progress! But the "friends of the people" remain deaf to all this. Having lost the good features of the old Russian social-revolutionary Narodism, they cling tightly to one of its gravest errors—its failure to understand the class antagonism within the peasantry.

"The peasantist [Narodnik] of 'the 'seventies,'" Hourwich aptly remarks, "had no idea of class antagonism within the ranks of the peasantry them-

selves, regarding it as confined entirely to the 'exploiter'—*kulak* or *miroyed* (*kulak* means 'fist'; *miroyed* means '*mir* fretter.' These are nicknames for the village usurer and saloon keeper)—and his victim, the peasant imbued with the communistic spirit.* Gleb Uspensky stood alone in his scepticism, opposing his ironical smile to the universal illusion. With his perfect knowledge of the peasantry, and his extraordinary artistic talent that penetrated to the very heart of the phenomena, he did not fail to see that individualism had become the basis of economic relations, not only as between the usurer and the debtor, but among the peasants at large.—Cf. his *Casting in One Mould* (*Ravneniye pod odno*), *Russkaya Mysl*, 1882, No. 1." (*Op. cit.*, p. 106.)

But if it was pardonable and even natural to succumb to this illusion in the 'sixties and 'seventies, when relatively accurate information about rural economy was so scarce, and when the disintegration of the villages had not yet become so marked, today one must deliberately close one's eyes not to see this disintegration. It is extremely characteristic that it is precisely at the present time, when the ruin of the peasantry seems to have reached its peak, that one hears so much on all sides about the progressive trends in peasant husbandry. Mr. V. V. (also a most indubitable "friend of the people") has written a whole book on this subject. And he cannot be accused of factual inaccuracy. On the

* "There have arisen opposite social classes within the village community," says Hourwich in another place (p. 104). I quote Hourwich only to supplement the facts enumerated above.

contrary, the technical, agronomical progress of the peasantry is a fact that cannot be doubted; but neither can the fact of the wholesale expropriation of the peasantry be doubted. And so we find the "friends of the people" concentrating all their attention on the fact that the "muzhik" is feverishly searching for new methods of cultivation that will lend fertility to the soil that feeds him—losing sight of the reverse side of the medal, namely, the feverish divorcement of the "muzhik" from the land. They bury their heads in the sand like ostriches so as to avoid looking facts in the face, so as not to see that what they are witnessing is precisely the process of transformation of the land from which the peasant is being divorced into capital, the process of creation of a home market.* Try to disprove the *existence* of these two processes, as opposite as the poles, in our village communities, try to *explain* them in any other way than by the bourgeois character of our society! That's too much to expect of them! Hallelujahs and humane and benevolent effusions are the alpha and omega of their "science" and of their whole political "activity."

And they even elevate this mild, liberal patching up of the present order to a regular philosophy. "Small, but effective deeds," says Mr. Krivenko, with an air of profundity, "are much better than

* The search for "new methods of cultivation" is becoming "feverish" just because the thrifty muzhik has to farm on a larger scale, which he cannot do by the old methods, just because he is compelled to seek new methods by competition, inasmuch as agriculture is more and more acquiring a commodity, bourgeois character.

grand inactivity." How new and original! Moreover, he goes on to say, "small deeds are by no means synonymous with small aims." And as an example of such an "extension of activity," when a small deed becomes "proper and good," he quotes the activity of a certain lady in organizing schools, the activities of lawyers in helping the peasants and eliminating pettifoggers, the proposal that lawyers accompany the circuit courts into the provinces to act as defendant's counsel, and, finally, the proposal, of which we have already heard, to open kustar stores: in this case the extension of activity (to the dimensions of a great aim) is to consist in opening stores "by the combined efforts of the Zemstvos in the busiest centres."

All this, of course, is very lofty, humane and liberal—"liberal," because it will free the bourgeois system of production from all its medieval encumbrances and thus make it easier for the worker to fight the system itself, which, of course, will be strengthened rather than weakened by such measures; and about all this we have been reading for a long time in all the Russian liberal publications. It would not be worth while arguing against this were we not compelled to do so by the gentlemen of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, who have begun to advance these "modest beginnings of liberalism" as arguments **AGAINST** the Social-Democrats and as a lesson to them, at the same time to rebuke them for having renounced the "ideals of the fathers." That being the case, we cannot help remarking that it is amusing, to say the least, to oppose the Social-Democrats with proposals and suggestions

for such moderate and punctilious *liberal* (in other words, bourgeois-serving) activity. As for the fathers and their ideals, it should be said that however erroneous and utopian the old theories of the Russian Narodniks may have been, they, at all events, were **ABSOLUTELY** opposed to such "modest beginnings of liberalism." I have borrowed the latter expression from Mr. N. K. Mikhailovsky's review "On the Russian Edition of K. Marx's Book" (*Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, 1872, No. 4)—a review that is written in a fresh, lively and spirited style (compared with his present writings), and that strongly protests against the proposal not to be rough with our young liberals.

But that was long ago, so long, in fact, that the "friends of the people" have managed to forget about it, and have, by their tactics, glaringly demonstrated that when a materialist criticism of political institutions is lacking, and when the class character of the modern state is not understood, political radicalism is only one step removed from political opportunism.

Here are a few examples of this opportunism.

"The transformation of the Ministry of State Property into the Ministry of Agriculture," declares Mr. Yuzhakov, "may profoundly influence the course of our economic development, but it may also prove to be nothing but a reshuffling of officials." (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 10.)

Everything depends, consequently, upon who will be "called"—the friends of the people or the representatives of the interests of the landlords and capitalists. The interests themselves need not be touched.

"The protection of the economically most weak from the economically strong is the first natural task of state interference," this same Mr. Yuzhakov continues in the same article; and he is seconded in the same terms by the chronicler of home affairs in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 2. And so as to leave no doubt that he interprets this philanthropic nonsense* in the same way as do his worthy fellow liberal and radical petty-bourgeois ideologists in Western Europe, he at once adds:

"Gladstone's Land Bills,[46] Bismarck's workers' insurance,[47] factory inspection, the idea of our Peasants' Bank, the organization of migration, measures against the kulak—all these are attempts to apply this same principle of state interference for the protection of the economically weak."

This at least has the merit of being frank. The author bluntly states that, like Messrs. Gladstone and Bismarck, he wants to stick to the present social relations, and that, like them, he wants to patch and darn present-day society (a bourgeois society—which he, like the West-European followers of the Gladstones and Bismarcks, does not understand), and not combat it. The fact that they regard the state—an organ which has sprung from the soil of this present-day society and which protects the interests of its ruling classes—as an instrument of reform, is in complete harmony with this, their fundamental theoretical tenet. They pos-

* It is nonsense because the strength of the "economically strong" lies, *among other things, in the fact that they* hold political power. Without it they could not maintain their economic rule.

itively believe the state to be omnipotent and above classes, and expect that it will not only "assist" the toilers, but create a real and proper order (as we have heard from Mr. Krivenko). But then, of course, nothing else was to be expected of them, purest of pure petty-bourgeois ideologists that they are. For it is one of the fundamental and characteristic features of the petty bourgeois—the feature incidentally which makes it a reactionary class—that the small producers, disunited and isolated by the very conditions of their work, and tied down to a definite place and to a definite exploiter, cannot understand the class character of the exploitation and oppression from which they suffer, and suffer sometimes no less than the proletarian; they cannot understand that in bourgeois society the state too is bound to be a class state.*

But why is it, most worthy "friends of the people," that up till now—and with particular energy since this very emancipatory reform—our government has been "supporting, protecting and creat-

* That is why the "friends of the people" are most arrant reactionaries when they say that it is the natural task of the state to protect the economically weak (that is what it *should be* according to their banal, old wives' morality), when the whole history and the whole internal politics of Russia testify that the task of our state is to protect only the feudal landlords and the big bourgeoisie, and to punish with the utmost brutality every attempt on the part of the "*economically weak*" to stand up for their own interests. And that, of course, is its *natural* task, because absolutism and bureaucracy are thoroughly saturated with the feudal-bourgeois spirit, and because in the economic sphere the bourgeoisie has undivided power and keeps the worker "in his place."

ing" only the bourgeoisie and capitalism? Why is it that this unseemly conduct on the part of this absolute government, which is supposed to stand above classes, has coincided precisely with a historical period which, in the internal life of the country, is characterized by the development of commodity production, commerce and industry? What makes you think that these last-mentioned changes in internal life are the effect and the government's policy the cause, when as a matter of fact these changes took place so deep down in society that the government did not even notice them and put innumerable obstacles in their way, and when as a matter of fact this very same "absolute" government, under other conditions of internal life, "supported," "protected" and "created" another class?

Oh, the "friends of the people" never concern themselves with such questions! All this is materialism, dialectics, "Hegelianism," "mysticism and metaphysics." They simply think that if they plead with this government nicely enough and humbly enough, it will put everything right. And as far as humility is concerned, one must do *Russkoye Bogatstvo* justice: it stands out even among the Russian liberal press for its inability to display the slightest independence. Judge for yourselves:

"The abolition of the salt tax, the abolition of the poll tax and the reduction of the land redemption payments" are described by Mr. Yuzhakov as "a considerable relief to popular husbandry." Oh, indeed! But was not the abolition of the salt tax accompanied by the imposition of a host of new indirect taxes and by an increase in the old taxes? Was

not the abolition of the poll tax accompanied by an increase in the duties paid by the former state peasants, an increase disguised by the conversion of these duties into redemption payments? And even now, after the famous reduction in the redemption payments (by which the government did not even return to the peasants the profit it had made out of the redemption operations), is there not still a discrepancy between the amount of the payments and the income from the land, i.e., a direct survival of feudal quitrent?—Never mind! What is important, you see, is "the first step," the "principle." As for the rest . . . the rest we can plead for later on!

But these are only the blossoms. Now for the fruit:

"The 'eighties eased the people's burden" (by the above measures!) "and thus saved them from utter ruin."

This is another classical example of shameless servility, which can be compared only with Mr. Mikhailovsky's statement, quoted above, to the effect that we have still to create a proletariat. One cannot help recalling in this connection Shchedrin's incisive description of the evolution of the Russian liberal.[48] This liberal starts out by pleading with the authorities to grant reforms "as far as possible," then he goes to beg for "well, at least something," and ends by taking up a permanent and unshakable stand of "applicable to the base rabble." And what else can one say of the "friends of the people," but that they have taken up this permanent and unshakable stand when, fresh from the

impressions of a famine which affected millions of people, and towards which the attitude of the government was first one of hucksterlike stinginess and then of hucksterlike cowardice, they declare in print that the government has saved the people from utter ruin!! Several years more will pass, during which the peasantry will be expropriated even more rapidly, the government will add to the establishment of the Ministry of Agriculture the abolition of one or two direct taxes and the imposition of several new indirect ones, the famine will then affect forty million people—and these gentlemen will write in the same old way: you see, forty million are starving, not fifty million; that is because the government has eased the people's burden and has saved them from utter ruin; it is because the government has hearkened to the voice of the "friends of the people" and has established a Ministry of Agriculture!

Another example:

In *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 2, the chronicler of home affairs argues that Russia is "fortunately" (*sic!*) a backward country, "which has preserved elements that enable her to base her economic system on the principle of solidarity,"* and that she is therefore able to act "in the sphere of international affairs as an exponent of economic solidarity" and

* Solidarity between whom? Between the landlord and the peasant, the thrifty muzhik and the starveling, the manufacturer and the worker? To understand what this classical "principle of solidarity" means, we must remember that solidarity between the employer and the workman is achieved by "reducing wages."

that the chances for this are enhanced by Russia's undeniable "political might"!!

This is said of the gendarme of Europe, that constant and most reliable bulwark of all reaction, who has reduced the Russian people to the ignominy while being oppressed at home, of serving as an instrument for oppressing the peoples in the West—it is this gendarme that is described as an exponent of economic solidarity!

This really is the limit! Messrs. the "friends of the people" will outdo any liberal. They not only plead with the government, they not only eulogize it, they positively pray to it, pray with such low bowing and with such zeal that an outsider cannot help feeling eerie at the sound of their loyal foreheads cracking on the flagstones.

Do you remember the German definition of a philistine?

Was ist der Philister?
Ein hohler Darm,
Voll Furcht und Hoffnung,
*Dass Gott erbarm.**

This definition does not quite apply to us. God . . . God takes a back seat with us. But the authorities . . . that's a different matter. And if in this definition we substitute the word "authorities" for the word "God" we shall get an exact description of the ideological stock-in-trade, the moral stand-

* What is a philistine? A hollow gut, full of fear and hope. God have mercy on us! (Goethe)—*Tr*

ards and the civic courage of the Russian humane and liberal "friends of the people."

To this absolutely preposterous view of the government, the "friends of the people" add a corresponding attitude toward the so-called "intelligentsia." Mr. Krivenko writes: "Literature . . ." should "appraise phenomena according to their social meaning and encourage every active effort to do good. It has called attention, and continues to call attention, to the shortage of teachers, doctors, technicians, to the fact that the people are sick and poor" (owing to the shortage of technicians!), "that they are illiterate, etc.; and when people come forward who have grown weary of card tables, private theatricals and eating the sturgeon patties at banquets given by Marshals of Nobility, and who go out to work with rare self-sacrifice" (think of it: they have sacrificed card tables, theatricals and patties!), "in spite of all obstacles, it should welcome them."

Two pages later, with the businesslike air of an old campaigner grown wise by experience, he reproves those who "wavered when confronted with the question whether or not to accept office as Zemsky Nachalniks, town mayors, or chairmen or members of Zemstvo Administrations[49] under the new regulations. In a society with a developed consciousness of civic requirements and duties" (really, gentlemen, this is as good as the speeches of famous Russian Pompadours like the Baranovs and Kosiches!), "such wavering and such an attitude to the matter would be inconceivable, because it would assimilate every reform that had any vital side to it at all in its own way, that is, would take advan-

tage of and help to develop those sides of the reform that were expedient; as to the undesirable sides, it would convert them into a dead letter; and if there were nothing vital in the reform at all, it would remain an entirely alien body."

What on earth! Such miserable twopenny-ha'penny opportunism, and yet he talks with such self-admiration! The task of literature is to collect all the drawing-room gossip about the wicked Marxists, to bow and cringe before the government for having saved the people from utter ruin, to welcome people who have grown weary of sitting around card tables, to teach the "public" not to fight shy even of such posts as rural prefectures. . . . What am I reading—*Nedelya*,[50] or *Novoye Vremya*? No, it is *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, the organ of the advanced Russian democrats. . . .

And people like these talk about the "ideals of the fathers," claim that they, and they alone, guard the traditions of the time when France sent the ideas of Socialism spreading through Europe—and when the assimilation of these ideas gave rise in Russia to the theories and teachings of Herzen and Chernyshevsky. This is really scandalous; and it would be positively outrageous and offensive—if *Russkoye Bogatstvo* were not so utterly amusing, if such statements in the pages of such a magazine aroused anything but Homeric laughter. Why, you are besmirching those ideals! For what were the ideals of the first Russian Socialists, the Socialists of the epoch which Kautsky so aptly described in the words:

"when every Socialist was a poet and every poet a Socialist?"

Faith in a special social system, in the communal structure of Russian life; hence—*faith in the possibility of a peasant socialist revolution*—that is what inspired them and roused scores and hundreds of people to wage a heroic struggle against the government. And you cannot reproach the Social-Democrats with failing to appreciate the immense historical services rendered by these, the finest people of their day, and with failing to respect their memory profoundly. But I ask you, where is that faith now? It has vanished. So utterly, that when last year Mr. V. V. tried to argue that the village community trains the people to common effort and is a home of altruistic sentiments, etc., even Mr. Mikhailovsky's conscience was pricked and he began shamefacedly to lecture Mr. V. V. and to point out that "no *investigation* has shown the connection between our village community and altruism." And, indeed, no investigation has. Yet there was a time when people did believe, and believed implicitly, without any investigation.

How? Why? On what grounds?

"every Socialist was a poet and every poet a Socialist;"

Moreover, adds Mr. Mikhailovsky, all conscientious investigators agree that the rural population is splitting up, giving rise, on the one hand, to a mass of proletarians, and, on the other, to a handful of "kulaks" who keep the rest of the population under their heel. And again he is right: the rural population is indeed splitting up. Nay, more, the rural population split up completely long ago. And the old Russian peasant Socialism split up with it,

making way for workers' Socialism, on the one hand, and for a degenerate and vulgar petty-bourgeois radicalism, on the other. This change cannot be described otherwise than as degeneration. From the doctrine that peasant life represents a special social order and that our country has taken an exceptional path of development, there has emerged a sort of diluted eclecticism, which can no longer deny that commodity production has become the basis of economic development and has grown into capitalism, but which refuses to perceive the bourgeois character of all the relations of production, refuses to perceive the necessity of the class struggle under this social system. From a political program that was calculated to *rouse the peasantry* for the socialist revolution *against the foundations of modern society** there has emerged a program calculated to patch up, to "improve" the conditions of the peasantry *while preserving the foundations of modern society*.

Strictly speaking, what has already been said should be enough to enable us to judge the kind of "criticism" that may be expected from these gentlemen of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* when they undertake to "demolish" the Social-Democrats. They do not make the slightest attempt to give a straightforward and conscientious exposition of the Social-

* That, in fact, was the substance of all our old revolutionary programs—from the Bakunists and the rebels, for example, to the Narodniks and finally the Narodovoltsi, with whom, too, the conviction that the peasants would send an overwhelming majority of Socialists to the future National Assembly was not the last consideration.

Democrats' conception of Russian realities (the censorship could not prevent them from doing so, if they laid most stress on the economic side and expressed themselves in the general and partly allegorical terms in which all their "polemics" are conducted) and to bring forward arguments against the conception itself, arguments showing that the practical conclusions drawn from it are wrong. They prefer instead to confine themselves to most vapid talk about abstract schemes and belief in them, about the conviction that every country has to pass through the phase . . . and similar nonsense, with which we have become sufficiently familiar in the case of Mr. Mikhailovsky. Often we get downright distortions. For instance, Mr. Krivenko declares that Marx "admitted that, if we desired it" (?!! So *according to Marx* the evolution of the economic relations of society is determined by human will and consciousness?? What is this—boundless ignorance or unparalleled effrontery?!), "and acted accordingly, we could avoid the vicissitudes of capitalism and proceed by a different and more expedient path" (*sic*!!!).

Our knight was able to talk such nonsense because he deliberately misquoted. Citing the passage from the well-known "K. Marx's Letter" (*Yuridichesky Vestnik*, 1888, No. 10), where Marx expresses his high esteem of Chernyshevsky, who thought that Russia might be able to avoid "experiencing the tortures of the capitalist regime," Mr. Krivenko closes the quotation marks, i.e., ends the reproduction of what Marx actually said (the last words of which were: "he [Chernyshevsky] pronounces

in favour of this latter solution"), and adds: "And I, says Marx, *share* (Krivenko's italics) these views" (p. 186, No. 12).

What Marx actually said was this: "And my honourable critic would have had at least as much reason for inferring from my consideration for this 'great Russian critic and man of learning' that I shared his views on the question, as for concluding from my polemic against the 'literary man' and Pan-Slavist[51] that I rejected them." (*Yuridichesky Vestnik*, 1888, No. 10, p. 271.)

And so Marx said that Mr. Mikhailovsky had no right to regard him as an opponent of the idea that Russia would develop along special lines because he also respected those who held this idea; but Mr. Krivenko misconstrues this to mean that Marx "admitted" this special line of development. This is a downright distortion. Marx's statement quoted above shows quite clearly that he evaded the question as such: "Mr. Mikhailovsky might have taken as his grounds either one of the two contradictory remarks, i.e., he had no grounds for basing his conclusions as to my views on Russian affairs generally on either of them." And in order to avoid any misinterpretation, Marx, in this very same "letter," gave a direct reply to the question how his theory could be applied to Russia. This reply very clearly shows that Marx avoided answering the question as such, avoided examining the Russian facts, which alone could decide the question: "If Russia," he replied, "is tending to become a capitalist nation after the example of the West-European countries, and during the last years she has been taking

a lot of trouble in this direction—she will not succeed without having first transformed a good part of her peasants into proletarians."

This, surely, is perfectly clear: the question was whether Russia was tending to become a capitalist nation, whether the ruin of her peasants was the process of creation of a capitalist system, a capitalist proletariat; and Marx replied that "if" she was tending, she would have to transform a good part of her peasants into proletarians. In other words, Marx's theory is to investigate and explain the evolution of the economic system of certain countries, and its "application" to Russia could only mean INVESTIGATING Russian relations of production and their evolution by EMPLOYING the means worked out by the MATERIALIST method and by THEORETICAL political economy.*

The working out of a new theory of methodology and political economy marked such gigantic progress in social science, such a tremendous forward stride for Socialism, that the principal theoretical question for the Russian Socialists almost immediately after the appearance of *Capital* was "the destiny of capitalism in Russia"; the most heated controversies raged around this question, and the most important points of program were decided in accordance with it. And it is noteworthy that when there appeared (about ten years ago) a separate group of Socialists

* I repeat that this conclusion could not but be clear to anybody who had read the *Communist Manifesto*, *The Poverty of Philosophy* and *Capital*, and that only for the benefit of Mr. Mikhailovsky was a special explanation required.

who answered the question whether the evolution of Russia was capitalist evolution in the affirmative and based this decision on the data of Russian economic realities, it encountered no direct and definite criticism on the actual point at issue, no criticism which accepted the same general methodological and theoretical principles and gave a different explanation of the data.

The "friends of the people," who have launched a veritable crusade against the Marxists, likewise make no investigation of the facts in support of their arguments. As we have seen in the first article, they confine themselves to phrases. Mr. Mikhailovsky never misses an opportunity to display his wit in taunting the Marxists about their lack of unanimity and the absence of agreement among themselves. And "our well-known" N. K. Mikhailovsky laughs heartily over his own joke about "genuine" and "non-genuine" Marxists. It is true that complete unanimity does not reign among the Marxists. But, firstly, Mr. Mikhailovsky misrepresents this fact; and, secondly, it reveals not the weakness, but the strength and vitality of Russian Social-Democracy. The fact of the matter is that it has been particularly characteristic of late for Socialists to arrive at Social-Democratic views by various paths and, therefore, while unreservedly agreeing on the fundamental and principal thesis—namely, that Russia is a bourgeois society which has grown out of the feudal system, that its political form is the class state, and that the only way to put an end to the exploitation of the toilers is through the class struggle of the proletariat—they differ on many

particular questions both in their methods of argument and in the detailed interpretation of this or that phenomenon of Russian life. I can therefore delight Mr. Mikhailovsky beforehand by stating that, within the limits of the fundamental thesis just mentioned, which all Social-Democrats accept, differences of opinion exist also on the questions that have been touched upon in these brief remarks, e.g., the peasant reform, the economics of peasant farming and the kustar trades, land renting, etc. The unanimity of people who content themselves with the unanimous acceptance of "lofty truths"—such as that the peasant reform *might* open for Russia a peaceful path of proper development; that the state *might* call, not upon the representatives of capitalist interests, but upon the "friends of the people"; that the village community *might* socialize agriculture and the manufacturing industries, which the kustar *might* develop into large-scale production; that *popular* land renting supports *popular* husbandry—this touching and moving unanimity has been replaced by disagreements among people who are seeking for an explanation of the *actual*, the *present* economic organization of Russia as a system of definite relations of production, and explanation of its *actual* economic evolution, of its political and other superstructures.

And if such work—while leading people from different angles to the acceptance of a common position, a position which undoubtedly dictates joint political action as well, and for that reason confers on all who accept it the right and duty to call themselves "SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS"—still leaves a wide

field for differences of opinion on a host of particular problems, which are open to various solutions, that, of course, merely goes to demonstrate the strength and vitality of Russian Social-Democracy.*

Moreover, anything worse than the conditions under which this work has to be done can scarcely be imagined: there is not, nor can there be, an organ to unite the various branches of the work; in view of the prevailing police conditions, private intercourse is extremely difficult. It is only natural that Social-Democrats cannot discuss and reach agreement among themselves as they should in regard to details, that they contradict each other. . . .

This is indeed funny, is it not?

Perplexity may be caused by Mr. Krivenko's references to "neo-Marxists" in his "polemic" against the Social-Democrats. Some readers might think that something in the nature of a split has taken place among the Social-Democrats, and that the "neo-Marxists" have broken away from the old Social-Democrats. Nothing of the kind. Nowhere

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* For the simple reason that these problems *have not been solved* so far. After all, you cannot regard as a solution of the land-renting problem the assertion that "popular land renting supports popular husbandry," or the following description of the system under which the peasant cultivates the landlord's land with his own implements: "The peasant has proved to be stronger than the landlord," who "has sacrificed his independence for the benefit of the independent peasant"; "the peasant has wrested large-scale production from the grasp of the landlord"; "the people are the victors in the struggle to determine the form of agriculture." This empty liberal phrasemongering is to be found in *The Destiny of Capitalism*, the work of "our well-known" Mr. V. V.

and never has anybody publicly criticized the theory and program of Russian Social-Democracy in the name of Marxism, or advocated any other kind of Marxism. The fact of the matter is that Messrs. Krivenko and Mikhailovsky have been listening to drawing-room gossip about the Marxists, have been observing various liberals who try to cover their liberal inanity by a cloak of Marxism, and, with their characteristic intelligence and tact, have set out with this stock-in-trade to "criticize" the Marxists. It is not surprising, therefore, that this "criticism" should consist of a regular chain of curiosities and filthy innuendoes.

"To be consistent," argues Mr. Krivenko, "one should give an affirmative answer to this" (the question: "Should we not work for the development of capitalist industry?"), and "there should be no shrinking from buying up peasants' land or from opening shops and pubs"; we should "rejoice at the success of the numerous tavern keepers in the Duma and assist the still more numerous dealers in peasants' grain."

That is really amusing. Try to explain to such a "friend of the people" that everywhere in Russia the exploitation of the toilers is essentially capitalistic, that the thrifty muzhiks and dealers should be classed under the category of representatives of capitalism because of such and such political-economic tokens, which prove the bourgeois character of the disintegration of the peasantry—why, he would raise a howl, call it outrageous heresy, shout about the blind acceptance of West-European formulas and abstract schemes (while at the same

time most carefully evading the actual meaning of the "heretical" argument). But when he wants to depict the "horrors" which the wicked Marxists would introduce, then lofty science and pure ideals may be left aside, and it is all right to admit that dealers in peasants' grain and peasants' land really are representatives of capitalism, and not merely "hankerers" after other people's goods.

Try to prove to such a "friend of the people" that not only has the Russian bourgeoisie already become master of the labour of the people everywhere—by the fact that the means of production are concentrated in its hands alone—but that it also brings pressure to bear upon the government, giving rise to, compelling and determining the bourgeois character of its policy—why, he would fly into a rage, begin to shout that our government is omnipotent, that only by fatal misunderstanding and unlucky chance does it always "call upon" representatives of the interests of capitalism and not upon the "friends of the people," that it is artificially implanting capitalism. . . . But they themselves are compelled to recognize on the sly that tavern keepers in the Duma, that is, one of the elements of this very government that is supposed to stand above classes, are representatives of capitalism. But, gentlemen, are the interests of capitalism in Russia represented only in the "Duma," and only by "tavern keepers"? . . .

As to filthy innuendoes, we have heard quite enough of them from Mr. Mikhailovsky, and we hear them again from Mr. Krivenko, who, for example, in his eagerness to annihilate the hated Social-

Democrats, relates that "some of them go into the factories" (that is, when they can get soft jobs as technicians or office workers), "claiming that their sole purpose is to accelerate the capitalist process." There is no need, of course, to reply to such positively indecent statements. The only thing to be done is to put a full stop here.

Go on in the same spirit, gentlemen, go boldly on! The imperial government, the one which, as you have just told us, has already taken measures (with certain flaws in them, it is true) to save the people from utter ruin, will take measures, this time without any flaws in them at all, to save your banality and ignorance from exposure. "Cultured society" will continue as hitherto, in the intervals between sturgeon patties and the card table, to talk about the "lesser brother" and to devise humane projects for "improving" his condition; its representatives will be pleased to learn from you that by taking up positions as Zemsky Nachalniks or other supervisors of the purses of the peasants they display a developed consciousness of civic requirements and duties. Go on! You may be certain not only of being left unmolested but even of approval and praise . . . from the lips of Messrs. the Burenins.

In conclusion, it would perhaps not be superfluous to reply to a question which in all probability has already occurred to more than one reader, namely, was it worth while arguing so long with such people? Was it worth while replying se-

riously to this stream of liberal and censor-protected abuse which they are pleased to call polemics?

I think it was worth while, not for their sake, of course, and not for the sake of the "cultured" public, but for the sake of the useful lesson which Russian Socialists can and should learn from this attack. This attack provides most striking and most convincing proof that the time in the social development of Russia when democracy and Socialism were merged in one inseparable and indissoluble whole (as was the case, for example, in Chernyshevsky's day) has gone never to return. Today there are no longer any grounds for the belief, which Russian Socialists here and there still cling to and which has a most harmful effect upon their theories and practical work, that there is no profound qualitative difference in Russia between the ideas of the democrats and those of the Socialists.

Quite the contrary: a wide gulf divides these ideas, and it is high time the Russian Socialists understood this, it is high time they understood that a COMPLETE and FINAL RUPTURE with the ideas of the democrats is INEVITABLE and IMPERATIVE!

For, let us see what this Russian democrat was in the days which gave rise to this idea, and what he has become now. The "friends of the people" provide enough material for such a comparison.

Extremely interesting in this connection is Mr. Krivenko's attack on Mr. Struve, who, in a German publication wrote an article criticizing Mr. Nik. —on's utopianism (his comment "On Capitalist Development in Russia," "Zur Beurtheilung der kapi-

talistischen Entwicklung Russlands," appeared in *Sozialpolitisches Centralblatt*[52] III, No. 1, October 2, 1893). Mr. Krivenko attacks Mr. Struve for, as he alleges, classing the ideas of those who "stand for the village community and the allotment" as "national Socialism" (which he regards as of a "purely utopian nature"). This terrible accusation of being a Socialist drives our worthy author into a rage:

"Were there no others" (apart from Herzen, Chernyshevsky and the Narodniks), he exclaims, "who stood for the village community and the allotment? What about those who drew up the peasant law, who made the community and the economic independence of the peasantry the basis of the reform; what about the investigators of our history and of contemporary social conditions who support these principles, and nearly the whole of our serious and respectable press, which also supports these principles—are they all victims of the delusion known as 'national Socialism'?"

Calm yourself, most worthy "friend of the people"! You were so scared by the awful accusation of being a Socialist that you did not even take the trouble to read Mr. Struve's "little article" carefully. And, indeed, what a crying injustice it would be to accuse those who stand for "the village community and the allotment" of being Socialists! Pray, what is there socialistic in this? Socialism, as we know, is a protest and a struggle against the exploitation of the toilers, a struggle for the complete abolition of this exploitation, while to "stand for the allotment" means being in favour of the peasants' buying out all the land they had at their

disposal. But even if one does not stand for the peasants' having to buy out the land, but for their retaining possession, without payment of compensation, of the land they possessed before the Reform, even so there is nothing socialistic in that, for it is precisely this peasant ownership of land (which arose during the feudal period) that has everywhere in the West, as in Russia,* been the basis of bourgeois society. What is there socialistic about "standing for the village community," i.e., protesting against police interference in the customary methods of distributing the land, when everyone knows that exploitation of the toilers can exist very well and is generated within this community? This is stretching the word "Socialism" to mean anything; why, Mr. Pobedonostsev[53] too will be called a Socialist next!

Mr. Struve is not guilty of such an awful injustice at all. He talks of the "utopianism of the national Socialism" of the *Narodniks*, and we are able to judge whom he classes as Narodniks by the fact that he refers to Plekhanov's *Our Differences* as a polemic against the Narodniks. Plekhanov's polemic was undoubtedly directed against Socialists, against people who have nothing in common with the "serious and respectable" Russian press. Mr. Krivenko, therefore, had no right to take as applying to himself what was meant for the Narodniks. If he was so anxious to know Mr. Struve's opinion about the trend he himself represents, I am sur-

* Which is proved by the disintegration of the peasantry.

prised that he did not mark and *did not translate for "Russkoye Bogatstvo"* the following passage in Mr. Struve's article:

"As capitalist development advances, the philosophy just described" (the Narodnik philosophy) "must become groundless. It will either degenerate (wird herabsinken) into a rather colourless reformist trend, capable of compromise and seeking for compromise,* promising rudiments of which have long been observable, or it will admit that the actual development is inevitable and will draw the theoretical and practical conclusions that logically follow from this—in other words, will cease to be utopian."

If Mr. Krivenko cannot guess where the rudiments of the trend that is only capable of compromise are to be found, I would advise him to glance at *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, the theoretical views of that magazine, which represent a pitiful attempt to piece together fragments of the Narodnik doctrine with the recognition of the capitalist development of Russia, and at its political program, which aims at improving and restoring the economy of the small producers on the basis of the present capitalist system.**

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* Ziemlich blasse kompromissfähige und kompromisssüchtige Reformrichtung—I think this might be rendered as "uplift opportunism."

** Generally speaking, Mr. Krivenko cuts a sorry figure in his attempt to wage war on Mr. Struve. He betrays a childish inability to bring forward any valid objection on the point at issue, and an equally childish irritation. For example, Mr. Struve says that Mr. Nik. —on is a "utopian," and gives very explicit reasons for calling him so: 1) be-

Generally speaking, one of the most characteristic and significant phenomena of our social life in *recent times is the degeneration of Narodism into* petty-bourgeois opportunism.

For if we examine the program of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*—the regulation of migration and land renting, cheap credit, museums, warehouses, improvement of technique, artels, common tillage and all the rest—we will find that it is indeed very widely supported in the "serious and respectable press," i.e., in the entire liberal press, the publications that

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cause he ignores the "actual development of Russia," and 2) because he appeals to "society" and the "state," failing to understand the class character of our state. What reply does Mr. Krivenko make to this? Does he deny that our development is really capitalist? Does he say that it is something else? Does he say that our state is not a class state? No. He prefers to ignore these questions altogether and to gird with comical passion at "stereotyped patterns" which he himself has invented. Another example. In addition to charging Mr. Nik. —on with failing to understand the class struggle, Mr. Struve reproaches him with grave errors of theory in the sphere of "purely economic facts." He points out, among other things, that, in speaking of the smallness of our non-agricultural population, Mr. Nik. —on "fails to observe that the capitalist development of Russia will work to smooth out this difference between 80 per cent" (rural population of Russia) "and 44 per cent" (rural population of America): "that, one might say, is its historical mission." Mr. Krivenko 1) garbles this passage by saying that "our" (?) mission is to divorce the peasant from the land, whereas the point is simply that capitalism tends to reduce the rural population, and 2) without saying a single word on the point at issue (whether a capitalist system that would not tend to reduce the rural population is possible), he talks a lot of nonsense about "pedants," etc. See Appendix II (p. 259 of this pamphlet.—*Ed.*).

are not the organs of the feudal landlords, or belong to the reptile press.[54] The idea that all these measures are necessary, useful, urgent, "innocuous" has taken deep root among the entire intelligentsia and is extremely widespread. One meets with it in the provincial sheets and newspapers, in all Zemstvo researches, statistics, descriptions, etc., etc. If *this* is to be regarded as Narodism, then undoubtedly its success is enormous and indisputable.

Only it is not Narodism (in the old, customary meaning of that term), and its success and wide dissemination have been attained at the price of vulgarizing Narodism, of converting social-revolutionary Narodism, which was sharply opposed to our liberalism, into uplift opportunism, which merges with this liberalism and expresses only the interests of the petty bourgeoisie.

To convince ourselves of this we need only turn to the pictures of disintegration among the peasants and handicraftsmen given above—and these pictures by no means depict new or isolated facts, but are simply an attempt to portray in terms of political economy the "school" of "bloodsuckers" and "labourers," whose existence in our rural districts is not denied even by our opponents. It goes without saying that the "Narodnik" measures can only serve to strengthen the petty bourgeoisie, or else (artels and common tillage) are bound to be miserable palliatives, remain pitiful experiments which the liberal bourgeoisie so tenderly cultivates everywhere in Europe for the simple reason that they do not in the least affect the "school" itself. For this reason, too, even gentlemen like Yermolov

and Witte[55] cannot object to progress of this kind. Quite the contrary. You are welcome to it, gentlemen! They will even grant you money for your "experiments," if only they serve to divert the "intelligentsia" from revolutionary work (emphasizing the antagonism, explaining it to the proletariat, attempting to direct this antagonism into the highroad of direct political struggle) to such attempts at patching up the antagonism, conciliating and uniting. By all means!

Let us dwell for a moment on the process which led to this degeneration of Narodism. When it first arose, in its original form, this theory was a fairly well-knit one: starting from the concept of a special form of popular life, it believed in the communistic instincts of the "communal" peasant and for that reason regarded the peasantry as the direct champion of Socialism. But it lacked theoretical elaboration and confirmation in the facts of Russian life, on the one hand, and experience in applying a political program based on these assumed qualities of the peasant, on the other.

The development of the theory accordingly proceeded along these two lines, the theoretical and the practical. The theoretical work was directed mainly towards studying that form of land*ownership* in which it was desired to see the rudiments of Communism; and this work yielded a wealth of factual material of the most varied kind. But this material, which mainly concerned the form of land*ownership*, completely obscured from the eyes of the investigators the *economics* of the countryside. This was all the more natural, firstly, because the investigators

lacked a firm theory of method in social science, a theory that would show the necessity for singling out and making a special study of the relations of production; and, secondly, because the factual material collected furnished direct evidence of the immediate needs of the peasantry, their immediate misfortunes, which had a crushing effect upon peasant economy. All the attention of the investigators was concentrated on studying these misfortunes—land hunger, heavy imposts, lack of rights, and the crushed and downtrodden condition of the peasants. All this was described and studied and explained with such a wealth of material, in such minute detail, that, if our state were not a class state, if its policy were not determined by the interests of the ruling classes, but by an impartial consideration of the "needs of the people," it would, of course, have been convinced a thousand times over of the necessity of removing these misfortunes. The naive investigators, believing in the possibility of "convincing" society and the state, were completely submerged in the details of the facts they had collected, and lost sight of one thing, the political-economic structure of the countryside; they lost sight of the main background of the economy that was really being crushed by these direct and immediate misfortunes. Naturally, the result was that defence of the interests of the economy which was being crushed by land hunger, etc., turned out to be a defence of the interests of the class in whose hands this economy was concentrated, the only class that could hold its own and develop under the given social and economic relations prevailing *within* the

village community, under the given economic system in the country.

Theoretical work directed towards the study of the institution which was to serve as the basis and support of the abolition of exploitation led to the drawing up of a program which expresses the interests of the petty bourgeoisie, i.e., the very class upon which the system of exploitation rests!

At the same time, practical revolutionary work also developed in an altogether unexpected direction. Belief in the communistic instincts of the muzhik naturally demanded that the Socialists abandon politics and "go among the people." A large number of extremely energetic and talented persons undertook to carry out this program, but practice convinced them of the naïveté of the idea that the instincts of the muzhik were communistic. However, it was decided that it was not the muzhik who was to blame, but the government—and the entire activity was then concentrated on fighting the government, a fight that was now waged by the intellectuals alone, sometimes joined by *workers*. At first this fight was waged in the name of Socialism and was based on the theory that the people were ready for Socialism and that it would be possible, merely by seizing power, to bring about not only a political revolution but a social revolution as well. Latterly, however, this theory is apparently becoming utterly discredited, and the struggle which the Narodovoltsi waged against the government is becoming a struggle of the radicals for political liberty.

Hence, from the other side, too, the work led to

results diametrically opposite to its point of departure; from this side, too, there has emerged a program which expresses only the interests of the radical bourgeois democracy. Strictly speaking, this process is not yet complete, but it seems to be already clearly defined. This development of Narodism was quite natural and inevitable, because the doctrine was based on the purely mythical idea of a special (communal) system of peasant economy; the myth dissolved when it came into contact with reality, and peasant Socialism was transformed into radical-democratic representation of the petty-bourgeois peasantry.

I will give examples showing the evolution of the democrat:

"We must see to it," argues Mr. Krivenko, "that instead of a universal man we do not get an all-Russian jellyfish filled only with a vague ferment of good sentiments but incapable either of real self-sacrifice or of doing anything durable in life." The moral is excellent, but let us see what it applies to. "In regard to the latter," continues Mr. Krivenko, "I am acquainted with the following vexatious fact"; in the south of Russia there lived some young people "who were inspired by the very best intentions and by a love of the lesser brother; they showed the greatest attention and respect for the muzhik; they treated him as the guest of honour, ate out of the same bowl with him, treated him to jam and biscuits; they paid him higher prices than others did; they gave him money—as loans, or as tips, or without any pretext at all; they told him about European institutions and workers' associations, etc. In the

same locality there lived a young German named Schmidt, the steward of the estate, or rather just a gardener, a man without any humanitarian ideas, a real, narrow, formal German soul" (*sic*??!!), etc. Three or four years passed, and these people separated and went their different ways. Another twenty years passed, and the author, on revisiting the locality, learned that "Mr. Schmidt" (as a reward for his useful activities gardener Schmidt had been promoted to Mr. Schmidt) had taught the peasants how to cultivate vineyards, from which they now obtain "a certain income," 75 to 100 rubles a year, and on this account they had preserved "kind memories" of him, whereas of the "gentlemen who merely cherished kind sentiments for the muzhik but did nothing tangible (!) for him, not even the memory was left."

A calculation shows that the events described occurred about 1869-70, that is, roughly at the time when the Russian Narodnik Socialists tried to introduce into Russia the most advanced and most important type of the "European institutions"—the International.[56]

Clearly, the impression created by Mr. Krivenko's account is a little too harsh, and so he hastens to make a reservation:

"I do not suggest, of course, that Schmidt is better than these gentlemen. I merely point out why, for all his defects, he left a more lasting impression in the locality and on the population." ("I do not suggest that he is better, I merely point out that he left a more lasting impression"—what nonsense is this?!) "Nor do I say that he did anything important;

on the contrary, I cite what he did as an example of a most trifling, incidental deed, which cost him nothing, but which was undoubtedly vital for all that."

The reservation, you see, is very ambiguous, but that is not the point; the point is that the author, in contrasting the fruitlessness of the one form of activity with the success of the other, apparently does not suspect that there is a fundamental difference of tendency between these two forms of activity. This is the salt of the story, which so characteristically brings out the features of the contemporary democrat.

The young people who talked to the muzhik about "European institutions and workers' associations" evidently wanted to rouse in the muzhik a desire to alter the form of social life (the conclusion I draw may be wrong in this instance, but everyone will agree, I think, that it is a legitimate one, for it follows inevitably from Mr. Krivenko's story), they wanted to rouse him for a social revolution against present-day society, which gives rise to such shameful exploitation and oppression of the toilers—alongside with universal rejoicing over all sorts of liberal progress. "Mr. Schmidt," on the other hand, true husbandman that he was, merely wanted to help other husbandmen to improve their husbandry—and nothing more. How can any comparison be made between these two trends of activity, which have diametrically opposite aims? Why, it is like comparing the failure of a person who tried to destroy a given structure with the success of a person who tried to reinforce it! To

draw a comparison that would have any sense at all, he should have inquired why the efforts of the young folk who went among the people to rouse the peasants for revolution were so unsuccessful—whether it was not due to the fact that they erroneously believed that the "peasantry" represents the toiling and exploited population, whereas in fact the peasantry does not constitute a separate class (—an illusion which can only be explained by the reflected influence of the epoch of the fall of serfdom, when the peasantry was indeed a *class*, only a class of feudal society), for within it a bourgeois and a proletarian class are forming—in a word, he should have examined the old socialist theories and the Social-Democratic criticism of these theories. But instead, Mr. Krivenko exerts himself to the utmost to prove that "Mr. Schmidt's" deed was "undoubtedly vital." But, esteemed Mr. "friend of the people," why hammer at an open door? Whoever doubts it? To lay out a vineyard and derive an income of 75 or 100 rubles per annum from it—what could be more vital?*

And the author goes on to explain that if one farmer lays out a vineyard, that is isolated activity; but if several farmers do so, that is common and widespread activity, which converts a small deed into a real and proper work: A. N. Engelhardt,[57]

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* You should have tried to suggest this "vital" deed to *those* young people who talked to the muzhik about European associations! You would have got a welcome and a reply you did not bargain for! You would have been as mortally terrified of their ideas as you now are of materialism and dialectics!

for example, not only used phosphates on his farm, but induced others to do so.

Now, really, isn't this democrat splendid!

We will quote another example, from the opinions on the peasant reform. What was the attitude towards this reform of a democrat of the above-mentioned epoch, when democracy and Socialism were undivided, namely, Chernyshevsky? Unable to express his opinion openly, he *remained silent*, but spoke of the contemplated reform in a circumlocutory way as follows:

"*Let us assume that I was interested in taking measures to protect the provisions out of which your dinner is made. It goes without saying that if I were prompted to do so by my kind disposition towards you, then my zeal would be based on the assumption that the provisions belonged to you and that the dinner prepared from these provisions would be wholesome and beneficial to you. Imagine my feelings, then, when I learn that the provisions do not belong to you at all, and that for every dinner prepared from them you are charged a price which not only exceeds the cost of the dinner*" (this was written *before* the Reform. Yet Messrs. the Yuzhakovs assert *now* that its fundamental principle was to give security to the peasants!!) "*but which you are in general unable to pay without extreme hardship. What thoughts will enter my head when I make such strange discoveries? . . . How stupid I was to take all that trouble about a matter for whose usefulness the conditions were not provided! Who but a fool would have taken the trouble to preserve property in certain hands*

without first satisfying himself that the property will pass into those hands, and on favourable terms? . . . Far better if these provisions were wasted, for they can only cause harm to my dear friend! Far better be done with the whole business for it can only cause your ruin!"

I have emphasized the passages which show most saliently how profoundly and splendidly Chernyshevsky understood the realities of his time, how well he understood what the payments the peasants were to make meant, and how well he understood the antagonism between the social classes in Russia. It is also important to note his ability to expound such purely revolutionary ideas in the censored press. He wrote the same thing in his illegal works, but without circumlocution. In *A Prologue to a Prologue*, Volgin (into whose mouth Chernyshevsky puts his own ideas) says:

*"Let the cause of peasant emancipation be placed in the hands of the landlords' party. It won't make much difference."** And in reply to the remark of his interlocutor that. on the contrary, the difference would be tremendous, because the landlords' party was opposed to allotting land to the peasants, he says very emphatically:

"No, not tremendous, but insignificant. It would be tremendous if the peasants obtained land without having to buy it out. There is a difference between taking a thing from a man and leaving it with him,

* I quote from Plekhanov's article "N. G. Chernyshevsky," in *Sotsial-Demokrat*.[58]

but there is no difference if you take payment from him. The only difference between the plan of the landlords' party and the plan of the progressives is that the former is simpler and briefer. For that reason it is even better. Less red tape and, in all probability, less of a burden on the peasants. Those peasants who have money will buy land. As to those who have no money—what's the use of obliging them to buy it? It will only ruin them. Buying out in instalments is buying all the same."

It required the genius of a Chernyshevsky to understand so clearly at that time, when the Peasant Reform was only being introduced (when it had not yet been properly elucidated even in Western Europe), that its character was fundamentally bourgeois, that even at that time Russian "society" and the Russian "state" were ruled and governed by social classes which were irreconcilably hostile to the toilers and which undoubtedly made the ruin and expropriation of the peasantry a foregone conclusion. Moreover, Chernyshevsky understood that the existence of a government that screens our antagonistic social relations is a terrible evil, which renders the position of the toilers ever so much worse.

"*To tell the truth,*" Volgin continues, "*it would be better if they were emancipated without land.*" (That is, since the feudal landlords are so strong, it would be better if they acted openly, straightforwardly, and said all that they had in mind, instead of hiding their

feudal interests behind the compromises of a hypocritical absolute government.)

"The way the thing is being put, I can see no reason for getting excited even over whether the peasants are emancipated or not, let alone whether the liberals or the landlords are to emancipate them. It is all one, to my mind. For that matter it would even be better if the landlords did it."

Here is a passage from "Unaddressed Letters": *"They say: emancipate the peasants. . . . Where are the forces for it? Those forces do not yet exist. It is useless tackling a job when the forces for it are lacking. Yet you see the way things are going. They will start emancipating. But what will come of it? Well, judge for yourself what comes of tackling a job which is beyond your powers. You just botch it—and the result is vile."*

Chernyshevsky understood that the Russian feudal, bureaucratic state was incapable of emancipating the peasants, that is, of deposing the feudal landowners, that it was only capable of something "vile," of a miserable compromise between the interests of the liberals (buying out in instalments is buying all the same) and the landlords, a compromise calculated to deceive the peasants with the illusion of security and freedom, but which would in fact ruin them and place them at the complete mercy of the landlords. And he protested, execrated the Reform, wanted it to fail, wanted the government to come a cropper in its equilibristic balancing between the liberals and the landlords, thus bringing about a

collapse that would put Russia on the highroad of an open class struggle.

Yet *today*, when Chernyshevsky's brilliant predictions have been justified, when the history of the past thirty years has ruthlessly swept aside all economic and political illusions, our contemporary "democrats" wax eloquent over the Reform, regard it as a sanction for "popular" industry, contrive to draw proof from it of the possibility of finding a way which would *get around* the social classes hostile to the toilers. I repeat, their attitude towards the Peasant Reform is a most striking proof of how profoundly bourgeois our democrats have become. These gentlemen have learned nothing, but they have forgotten a great deal.

For the sake of comparison, I will take *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* for 1872. I have already quoted passages from the article, "The Plutocracy and Its Foundations," which dealt with the successes Russian society achieved in respect to liberalism (which serves to conceal plutocratic interests) in the very first decade after the "great emancipatory" Reform.

While formerly, says the author in this article, one would often find people who whined over the reforms and wailed for the good old days, they are not to be found any longer. "Everybody is pleased with the new order of things; everybody is happy and satisfied." And the author goes on to say that literature "itself is becoming an organ of the plutocracy," advocating the interests and aspirations of the plutocracy "under the cloak of

democracy." Examine this argument a little more closely. The author is displeased with the fact that "everybody" is pleased with the new order of things brought about by the Reform, that "everybody" (the representatives of "society" and of the "intelligentsia," of course, not of the toilers) is happy and satisfied, notwithstanding the obviously antagonistic, bourgeois features of the new order of things: the public fail to observe that liberalism merely serves to screen "freedom of acquisition," acquisition, of course, at the expense and to the disadvantage of the mass of the toilers. And he protests. It is precisely this protest, which is characteristic of the Socialist, that is valuable in his argument. Observe that this protest against a plutocracy masked by democracy contradicts the general theory of the magazine: for they deny that there are any bourgeois features, elements or interests in the Peasant Reform, they deny the class character of the Russian intelligentsia and of the Russian state, they deny that there is a soil for capitalism in Russia—nevertheless, they cannot but sense and perceive the capitalism and bourgeoisdom. And to the extent that *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, sensing the antagonism in Russian society, fought bourgeois liberalism and bourgeois democracy—to that extent it fought in a cause common to all our pioneer Socialists, who, although they could not understand this antagonism, nevertheless realized its existence and desired to fight the very organization of society which gave rise to it; to that extent *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* was progressive (from the point

of view of the proletariat, of course). The "friends of the people" have forgotten this antagonism, they have lost all sensibility of the fact that in this country too, in Holy Russia, the pure-blooded bourgeois hide "under the cloak of democracy"; and that is why they are now reactionary (in relation to the proletariat), for they try to gloss over the antagonism, and talk, not of struggle, but of conciliatory, uplift activity.

But, gentlemen, has the Russian clear-browed liberal, the democratic representative of the plutocracy of the 'sixties, ceased to be the ideologist of the bourgeoisie in the 'nineties just because his brow has become clouded with civic grief?

Does "freedom of acquisition" on a large scale, freedom to acquire big credits, big capital, big technical improvements, cease to be liberal, i.e., bourgeois, while the present economic relations of society remain unchanged, merely because its place is taken by freedom to acquire small credits, small capital, small technical improvements?

I repeat, it is not that they have altered their opinions under the influence of a radical change of views or a radical change in the order of things. No, they have simply forgotten.

Having lost the only feature that once made their predecessors progressive—notwithstanding the utter unsoundness of their theories and their naive and utopian outlook on reality—the "friends of the people" have learnt absolutely nothing in the meantime. And yet, quite apart from a political-economic analysis of Russian realities, the

political history of Russia during the past thirty years alone should have been enough to teach them a great deal.

At that time, in the era of the "'sixties," the power of the feudal landlords had been snapped: they suffered, not final defeat, it is true, but such a decided reverse that they had to slink from the stage. The liberals, on the contrary, raised their heads. Streams of liberal phrasemongering began to pour forth about progress, science, the public good, struggle against injustice, the interests of the people, the conscience of the people, the forces of the people, etc., etc.—the very phrases which now too our radical snivellers, at moments of particular depression, vomit forth in their salons, and our liberal phrasemongers at their anniversary dinners and in the columns of their magazines and newspapers. The liberals proved strong enough to mould the "new order of things" in their own image—not entirely, of course, but in quite a fair measure. Nor did "the clear light of the open class struggle" shine in Russia at that time; but there was more light then than there is now, so that even those ideologists of the toiling classes who had not the faintest notion of this class struggle, and who preferred to dream of a better future rather than *explain* the vile present, could not help seeing that liberalism was a cloak for plutocracy, and that the new order of things was a bourgeois order. It was the fact that the feudal landowners had been removed from the stage and no longer diverted attention to even more crying evils, and no long-

er prevented the new order of things from being discerned in its (relatively) pure form, that enabled this to be seen. But although the democrats of that time knew how to denounce plutocratic liberalism, they could not understand and explain it scientifically; they could not understand that it was inevitable under the capitalist organization of our social economy; they could not understand the progressive character of the new system of life as compared with the old, feudal system; they could not understand the revolutionary role of the proletariat it created; and they limited themselves to "snorting" at this system of "liberty" and "humanitarianism," imagined that its bourgeoisdom was fortuitous, and expected some other kind of social relations to reveal themselves in the "popular system."

And then history showed them these other social relations. The feudal landlords, not completely crushed by the Reform, which was so outrageously mutilated in their interests, revived (for a time) and strikingly demonstrated what these other than bourgeois social relations were, demonstrated it in the form of such unbridled, incredibly senseless and brutal reaction that our democrats caught fright and subsided, and instead of advancing and remoulding their naive democracy —which was able to sense the bourgeoisdom but was unable to understand it—into Social-Democracy, they retreated, went back to the liberals, and are now proud of the fact that their snivelling . . . their theories and programs, I meant to say—is shared by "the whole of the serious and respect-

able press." One would have thought the lesson was a very convincing one: the illusions of the old Socialists concerning some special mode of life of the people, the socialistic instincts of the people, and the fortuitous character of capitalism and the bourgeoisie, had become too obvious; one would have thought that it was now time to look facts straight in the face and openly admit that no social and economic relations other than bourgeois and moribund feudal relations have existed or exist in Russia, and that, therefore, there can be no road to Socialism except through the working-class movement. But these democrats learned nothing, and the naive illusions of petty-bourgeois Socialism gave way to the practical sobriety of petty-bourgeois progress.

Today the theories of these petty-bourgeois ideologists, when they come forward as the spokesmen of the interests of the toilers, are positively reactionary. They obscure the antagonisms of contemporary Russian social and economic relations and argue as if things could be improved by general measures, applicable to all, for "raising," "improving," etc., and as if it were possible to reconcile and to unite. They are reactionary in depicting our state as something standing above classes, and therefore fit and capable of rendering serious and honest aid to the exploited population.

They are reactionary, lastly, because they totally fail to understand the necessity for a struggle, a desperate struggle on the part of the toilers themselves for their emancipation. The "friends of the people," for example, seem to think they can manage

the whole thing themselves. The workers need not worry. Look you, an engineer even visited the offices of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, and they almost completely worked out a "scheme" for "introducing capitalism into the life of the people." Socialists must break **ONCE AND FOR ALL** with all petty-bourgeois ideas and theories—**THAT IS THE PRINCIPAL USEFUL LESSON** to be drawn from this campaign.

I want you to note that I speak of breaking with petty-bourgeois ideas and not of breaking with the "friends of the people" and with their ideas—because there can be no breaking with something with which there has never been any connection. The "friends of the people" are only one of the varieties of one of the trends of this sort of petty-bourgeois socialist ideas. And if, in this case, I draw the conclusion that it is necessary to break with petty-bourgeois socialist ideas, with the ideas of the old Russian peasant Socialism *generally*, it is because the campaign now launched against the Marxists by the representatives of the old ideas, who are scared by the growth of Marxism, has induced them to depict the petty-bourgeois ideas in unusually thorough and bold relief. Comparing these ideas with modern Socialism and with the facts of modern Russian life, we see with astonishing clarity how empty these ideas have become, how they have lost every vestige of an integral theoretical basis and have sunk to the level of pitiful eclecticism, to the level of an ordinary opportunist uplift program. It may be said that this is not the fault of the old socialist ideas in general, but of these particular gentry,

whom no one even thinks of classing as Socialists; but it seems to me that such an argument would be quite unsound. I have throughout tried to show that such a degeneration of the old theories was inevitable. I have throughout tried to devote as little space as possible to criticism of these gentry in particular and as much space as possible to the general and fundamental theses of the old Russian Socialism. And if the Socialists should find that I have stated these theses incorrectly and inaccurately, that I have left something unsaid, then I will have only a humble request to make: please, gentlemen, state them yourselves, state them fully, as they ought to be stated!

Indeed, no one would be more pleased of an opportunity to enter into a polemic with the Socialists than the Social-Democrats.

Do you think we find any pleasure in replying to the "polemics" of these gentry, or that we would have undertaken it if they had not thrown down a direct, persistent and emphatic challenge?

Do you think we do not have to force ourselves to read, re-read and delve into the meaning of this repulsive mixture of stereotyped liberal phrasemongering and philistine moralizing?

Surely, we are not to blame for the fact that only such gentry now take it upon themselves to vindicate and expound these ideas. I want you also to note that I speak of the necessity of breaking with the petty-bourgeois ideas of *Socialism*. The petty-bourgeois theories we have discussed are **ABSOLUTELY** reactionary **IN SO FAR AS** they are put forward as socialist theories.

But if we understand that there is absolutely nothing socialistic in all these theories, that is, that they completely fail to explain the exploitation of the toilers and are therefore absolutely useless as a means for their emancipation, that as a matter of fact all these theories reflect and further the interests of the petty bourgeoisie—then our attitude towards them must be different, and we must ask: *What should be the attitude of the working class towards the petty bourgeoisie and its programs?* And this question cannot be answered unless the dual character of this class is taken into consideration (in Russia this duality is particularly marked owing to the fact that the antagonism between the big bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie is less developed). It is progressive in so far as it puts forward general democratic demands, i.e., fights against all survivals of the epoch of medievalism and serfdom; it is reactionary in so far as it fights to preserve its status as a petty bourgeoisie and to retard, to turn back the general development of the country along bourgeois lines. Reactionary demands of this kind, such as, for example, the notorious demand for the inalienability of allotments, as well as the many other projects for instituting tutelage over the peasants, are usually put forward on the plausible plea of protecting the toilers; but actually, of course, they would only make their condition worse, while at the same time hampering them in their struggle for emancipation. A strict distinction must be drawn between these two sides of the petty-bourgeois program and, while denying that these theories are in any way socialistic in character, and

while combating their reactionary sides, we must not forget their democratic part. I will quote an example to show that, although the Marxists completely repudiate petty-bourgeois theories, this does not prevent them from including democracy in their program, but, on the contrary, calls for stronger insistence on it than ever. We have mentioned above the three main theses that always formed the theoretical stock-in-trade of the representatives of petty-bourgeois Socialism, viz., land hunger, high payments and the tyranny of the administration.

There is absolutely nothing socialistic in the demand for the abolition of these evils, for they do not in the least explain the causes of expropriation and exploitation, and their removal would not in the least affect the oppression of labour by capital. But the removal of these evils would free this oppression of the medieval survivals that serve to aggravate it, and would facilitate the direct struggle of the worker against capital, and for that reason, as a democratic demand, would meet with the most energetic support of the workers. Generally speaking, the question of payments and taxes is one to which only the petty bourgeois can attach any particular significance; but in Russia the payments made by the peasants are, in many respects, simply survivals of feudalism. Such, for example, are the redemption payments, which should be immediately and unconditionally abolished; such, too, are those taxes which only the peasants and the burghers pay, but from which the "gentry" are exempt. Social-Democrats will always support the demand for the removal of these survivals of medieval relations,

which cause economic and political stagnation. The same thing must be said in regard to the land hunger. I have already stopped at length to prove the bourgeois character of the complaints on this score. However, there is no doubt, for example, that by permitting the "otrezki,"[59] the Peasant Reform positively robbed the peasants for the benefit of the landlords and rendered service to this tremendous reactionary force both directly (by enclosing the peasants' lands) and indirectly (by the artful way in which the peasant allotments were marked out). And Social-Democrats will most strenuously insist on the immediate return to the peasants of the land of which they have been deprived, and on the complete expropriation of the landed estates—that bulwark of feudal institutions and traditions. This latter point, which coincides with the nationalization of the land, contains nothing socialistic, because the farmer system, which is already arising in this country, would only be brought to more rapid and abundant fruition thereby; but it is extremely important from the democratic standpoint as the only measure that can finally break the power of the landed nobility. Lastly, while only people like Messrs. Yuzhakov and V. V., of course, can assert that the expropriation and exploitation of the peasants is due to their lack of rights, the tyranny of the administration over the peasantry is not only an unquestionable fact, but is something more than mere tyranny; it is treating the peasants as a "base rabble," who by their very nature must be subject to the landed nobility, who are granted common civic rights only as a special favour (migra-

tion,* for example), and whom any satrap can order about as if they were workhouse inmates. And the Social-Democrats unreservedly associate themselves with the demand for the complete restoration of civic rights to the peasants, for the complete abolition of all the privileges of the nobility, for the abolition of the bureaucratic tutelage over the peasantry, and for self-government for the peasantry.

Generally speaking, the Russian Communists, the Russian adherents of Marxism, ought more than any others to call themselves **SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS**, and in their activities they must never forget the enormous importance of **DEMOCRACY.****

In Russia, the remnants of medieval, semifeudal institutions are still so very strong (as compared with Western Europe), they impose such a heavy yoke upon the proletariat and the people generally, retarding the growth of political thought in all ranks and classes, that one cannot refrain from insisting how tremendously important it is for the workers

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* One cannot help recalling the purely Russian feudal arrogance with which Mr. Yermolov, now Minister of Agriculture, objects to migration in his book *Crop Failures and the Distress of the People*. It cannot be regarded as rational from the point of view of the state, he says, when the landlords in European Russia still experience a shortage of labour. And, indeed, what do the peasants exist for, if not by their labour to feed the idle landlords and their "high-placed" servitors!

** This is a very important point. Plekhanov is quite right when he says that our revolutionaries have "two enemies: old prejudices that have not yet been entirely eradicated, on the one hand, and a narrow conception of the new program, on the other." See Appendix III (p. 285 of this pamphlet.—*Ed.*).

to combat all feudal institutions, absolutism, the social estates system and the bureaucracy. It must be explained to the worker in the greatest detail what a terrible reactionary force these institutions are, how they intensify the oppression of labour by capital, how they degrade the working people, how they maintain capital in its medieval forms, which, while not in the least outdone by the modern, industrial forms in the exploitation of labour, supplement this exploitation by placing enormous difficulties in the way of the struggle for emancipation. The workers must know that unless these pillars of reaction* are overthrown, it will be utterly impossible for them to wage a successful struggle against the bourgeoisie, because as long as they exist the

* A particularly imposing reactionary institution, one to which our revolutionaries have paid relatively little attention, is our *bureaucracy*, which de facto rules the Russian state. Its ranks filled mainly by commoners, this bureaucracy is both in origin and in the purpose and character of its activities profoundly bourgeois, but absolutism and the enormous political privileges of the landed nobility have lent it particularly pernicious qualities. It is ever a weathercock which regards it as its supreme task to reconcile the interests of the landlord and the bourgeois. It is a Judas using his feudal sympathies and connections to fool the workers and peasants and, on the pretext of "protecting the economically weak" and acting as their "guardian" against the kulak and usurer, resorts to measures which reduce the toilers to the status of a "base rabble," completely delivering them into the hands of the feudal landlords and making them all the more defenceless against the bourgeoisie. It is a most dangerous hypocrite—having learned from the experience of the West-European masters of reaction, it skilfully conceals its Arakcheyev[60] designs behind the fig leaf of phrases about loving the people.

Russian rural proletariat, whose support is an essential condition for the victory of the working class, will never cease to be downtrodden and cowed, capable only of sullen desperation and not of intelligent and persistent protest and struggle. And therefore it is the direct duty of the working class to fight side by side with the radical democracy against absolutism and the reactionary estates and institutions—and the Social-Democrats must impress this upon the workers, while not for a moment ceasing to impress upon them also that the struggle against all these institutions is necessary only as a means of facilitating the struggle against the bourgeoisie, that the achievement of general democratic demands is necessary for the worker only to clear the road to victory over the chief enemy of the working people, over an institution which is purely democratic by nature, viz., *capital*, which here in Russia is particularly inclined to sacrifice its democracy and to enter into alliance with the reactionaries in order to suppress the workers and to still further retard the rise of a working-class movement.

What has been said is, I think, sufficient to define the attitude of the Social-Democrats towards absolutism and political liberty, and also towards the trend, which has been growing particularly strong of late, that aims to "amalgamate" and "unite" all the revolutionary groups for the purpose of winning political liberty.[61]

This trend is rather peculiar and characteristic.

It is peculiar because the proposal for "unity" does not come from a definite group, or groups, with definite programs which coincide in one point

or another. If it did, the question of unity could be decided in each separate case; it would be a concrete question that could be decided by the representatives of the uniting groups. Then there could be no special "amalgamation" trend. But there is such a trend, and it originates simply with people who have cut adrift from the old, and have not moored to anything new. The theory on which the fighters against absolutism have hitherto based themselves is obviously crumbling, and this is also destroying the conditions of solidarity and organization which are essential for the struggle. And so, these "amalgamators" and "uniters" seem to think that the easiest way to create such a theory is to reduce it all to a protest against absolutism and a demand for political liberty, while evading all other questions, socialist and non-socialist. It goes without saying that this naive fallacy will inevitably be refuted at the very first attempts at such union.

But what makes this "amalgamation" trend characteristic is that it expresses one of the latest stages in that process of transformation of militant, revolutionary Narodism into political radical democracy which I have tried to outline above. A durable amalgamation of all the non-Social-Democratic revolutionary groups under the banner mentioned will be possible only when a durable program of *democratic* demands has been drawn up that will put an end to the prejudices of the old Russian exceptionalism. Of course, the Social-Democrats believe that the formation of such a democratic party would be a useful step forward; and their work of opposing Narodism should further it, should further the

eradication of all prejudices and myths, the grouping of all Socialists under the banner of Marxism and the formation of a democratic party by the other groups.

The Social-Democrats could not, of course, "amalgamate" with such a party, for they consider it necessary for the workers to organize into an independent workers' party; but the workers would most strongly support any struggle the democrats put up against reactionary institutions.

The degeneration of Narodism into the most ordinary petty-bourgeois radical theory—of which (degeneration) the "friends of the people" furnish such striking testimony—shows how serious is the mistake committed by those who call upon the workers to fight absolutism without at the same time explaining to them the antagonistic character of our social relations—by virtue of which the ideologists of the bourgeoisie also stand for political liberty—without explaining to them the historical role of the Russian worker as the champion of the emancipation of all the toiling population.

The Social-Democrats are often accused of wanting to monopolize Marx's theory, whereas, it is argued, his economic theory is accepted by all Socialists. But what, one asks, is the use of explaining to the workers the form of value, the nature of the bourgeois system and the revolutionary role of the proletariat, if here in Russia the exploitation of the toilers is generally and universally attributed not to the bourgeois organization of social economy, but, say, to land

hunger, payments, or the tyranny of the administration?

What is the use of expounding the theory of the class struggle to the worker, if that theory cannot even explain his relation to the factory owner (capitalism in Russia is artificially implanted by the government), not to mention the mass of the "people," who do not belong to the fully-evolved class of factory workers?

How can one accept Marx's economic theory and its corollary—the revolutionary role of the proletariat as the organizer of Communism through the medium of capitalism—if one tries to find ways to Communism other than through capitalism and the proletariat it creates?

Obviously, to call upon the worker to fight for political liberty under such conditions would be equivalent to calling upon him to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the progressive bourgeoisie. For it cannot be denied (it is significant that even the Narodniks and the Narodovoltsi did not deny it) that political liberty will primarily serve the interests of the bourgeoisie and will not improve the conditions of the workers, but . . . only the conditions for their struggle . . . *against this very bourgeoisie*. I say this as against the Socialists who, while they do not accept the theory of the Social-Democrats, carry their agitation among the workers, having become convinced empirically that only among the latter are revolutionary elements to be found. The theory of these Socialists contradicts their practice, and they make the very serious mistake of distracting the

workers from their direct task of **ORGANIZING A SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY.***

This mistake arose naturally at a time when the class antagonisms of bourgeois society were as yet quite undeveloped, when they were held down by serfdom, when the latter gave rise to a unanimous protest and struggle on the part of the whole of the intelligentsia, which created the illusion that there was something peculiarly democratic about our intelligentsia, and that there was no profound gulf between the ideas of the liberals and those of the Socialists. Now, however, when economic development has advanced so far that even those who formerly denied that there was any soil for capitalism in Russia admit that it is precisely the capitalist path of development that we have entered, illusions on this score are no longer possible. The composition of the "intelligentsia" is coming to be just as clear as that of the society engaged in the production of material values: while the latter is ruled and governed by the capitalist, the "tone" of the former is set by

* There are two ways of arriving at the conclusion that the worker must be roused to fight absolutism: *either* by regarding the worker as the sole champion of the socialist system, and political freedom, therefore, as one of the means of facilitating his struggle. That is the view of the Social-Democrats. *Or* by appealing to him simply as the man who suffers most from the present system, who has nothing more to lose and who can most determinedly take up the cudgels against absolutism. But that will mean compelling the worker to follow in the wake of the bourgeois radicals, who refuse to see the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie behind the solidarity of the whole "people" against absolutism.

the rapidly growing horde of careerists and bourgeois hirelings, an "intelligentsia" which is contented and satisfied, which is a stranger to all fantasy and which knows very well what it wants. Far from denying this, our radicals and liberals strongly emphasize it and strain themselves to prove how immoral it is, condemn it, strive to confound it, to shame it . . . and to destroy it. These naive efforts to make the bourgeois intelligentsia *ashamed* of being bourgeois are as ridiculous as the efforts of our petty-bourgeois economists to frighten our bourgeoisie (pleading the experience of "elder brothers") by warning them that they are making for the ruin of the people, the poverty, unemployment and starvation of the masses; this sitting in judgment on the bourgeoisie and its ideologists is reminiscent of the court which was held on the pike, and which sentenced it to be thrown into the river. Beyond these stand the liberal and radical "intelligentsia," who spout endlessly about progress, science, truth, the people, etc., and who love to lament the passing of the 'sixties, when there was no discord, depression, despondency and apathy, and when all hearts were fired by democracy.

With their characteristic simplicity, these gentlemen refuse to understand that the unanimity that then prevailed was due to the material conditions of the time, which can never return: serfdom oppressed all equally—the serf steward, who had saved up a bit of money and wanted to live in comfort; the thrifty muzhik, who hated the landlord because of the dues he had to pay him, and because he interfered in his business and

tore him from his work; the proletarian domestic and the impoverished muzhik who was sold into bondage to the merchant; all suffered from serfdom: the merchant manufacturer, the worker, the kustar and the artisan. The only tie that linked all these people together was their hostility to serfdom; beyond that unanimity, the sharpest economic antagonisms began. How completely one must be lulled by sweet illusions to fail to perceive these antagonisms even today, when they have become so enormously developed, and to weep for the return of the times of unanimity, when the realities of the situation demand struggle, demand that everyone who does not desire to be a **WILLING** or **UNWILLING** timeserver of the bourgeoisie shall take his stand *on the side of the proletariat!*

If you refuse to believe the florid talk about the "interests of the people" and try to delve deeper into the matter, you will find that you are dealing with the purest ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie, which dreams of improving, supporting and restoring its ("popular" in their jargon) husbandry by various innocent progressive measures, and which is totally incapable of understanding that, the relations of production being what they are, the only effect such progressive measures can have is to proletarianize the masses still more. We cannot but be grateful to the "friends of the people" for having done so much to reveal the class character of our intelligentsia and for thus having fortified the Marxists' theory that our small producers are petty bourgeois. They must inevitably hasten the dissipation of the old

illusions and myths that have so long confused the minds of the Russian Socialists. The "friends of the people" have so mauled, vulgarized and soiled these theories that the Russian Socialists who held them are confronted with the inexorable dilemma—either to revise them, or to abandon them altogether and leave them to the exclusive use of the gentlemen who with smug solemnity announce urbi,et orbi that the rich peasants are buying improved implements, and who with serious mien assure us that we must welcome people who have grown weary of sitting around card tables. And in this strain they talk about a "popular system" and the "intelligentsia"—talk, not only with a serious air, but in pretentious, pompous phrases about broad ideals, about an ideal treatment of the problems of life! . . .

The socialist intelligentsia can expect to perform fruitful work only when it abandons its illusions and begins to seek support in the actual, and not the desired development of Russia, in the actual, and not the possible social-economic relations. Moreover, its **THEORETICAL** work must be directed towards *the concrete study of all forms of economic antagonism in Russia, the study of their connections and sequence of development*; it must *disclose these antagonisms wherever they have been concealed by political history, by the peculiarities of legal systems or by established theoretical prejudice.* It must *present an integral picture of our conditions as a definite system of relations of production*, it must *show the necessity of the exploitation and expropriation of the*

toilers under this system, and must *point the way out of this system as indicated by economic development.*

This theory, based on a detailed study of Russian history and realities, must furnish an answer to the needs of the proletariat—and if it satisfies the requirements of science, then every awakening of the protesting thought of the proletariat will inevitably guide this thought into the channels of Social-Democracy. The farther the building up of this theory advances, the more rapidly will Social-Democracy grow; for even the most artful guardians of the present system cannot prevent the awakening of the thought of the proletariat, because this system itself necessarily and inevitably leads to the intensified expropriation of the producers, to the continuous growth of the proletariat and of its reserve army—and this simultaneously with the progress of social wealth, the enormous growth of productive forces, and the socialization of labour by capitalism. Although a great deal has still to be done to build up this theory, the accomplishment of this task by the Socialists is guaranteed by the spread among them of materialism, the only scientific method, a method which demands that every program shall be a precise formulation of the actual process; it is guaranteed by the success of Social-Democracy, which has adopted these ideas—a success which has so stirred up our liberals and democrats that, as a certain Marxist puts it, their magazines have ceased to be dull.

In thus emphasizing the necessity, importance and immensity of the theoretical work of the So.

cial-Democrats, I have not the least desire to suggest that this work must take precedence over **PRACTICAL** work*—still less that the latter be postponed until the former is completed. Only the admirers of the "subjective method in sociology," or the followers of utopian Socialism, could arrive at such a conclusion. Of course, if it is presumed that the task of Socialists is to seek "different" (from the actual) "paths of development" for the country, then, naturally, practical work becomes possible only when philosophical geniuses discover and indicate these "different paths"; and the discovery and indication of these paths will, in turn, mark the close of theoretical work, and the beginning of the work of those who are to direct the "fatherland" along the "newly-discovered" "different paths." The position is altogether different when the task of the Socialists is understood to mean that they must be the ideological leaders of the proletariat in its actual struggle against actual and real enemies who stand in the *actual* path of social and economic development. In these circumstances, theoretical and practical work merge into one, which the veteran German Social-Democrat, Liebknecht, aptly described as:

Studieren, Propagandieren, Organisieren.**

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* On the contrary, the practical work of propaganda and agitation must always take precedence, because: 1) theoretical work only provides replies to the problems which practical work raises, and 2) the Social-Democrats, for reasons over which they have no control, are too often compelled to confine themselves to theoretical work not to value highly every moment when practical work becomes possible.

** Study, propaganda, organization.—*Tr.*

It is impossible to be an ideological leader without performing the above-mentioned theoretical work, just as it is impossible to be an ideological leader without directing this work to meet the requirements of the cause, and without propagating the results of this theory among the workers and helping them to organize.

Presenting the task in this way will guard Social-Democracy against the defects of dogmatism and sectarianism from which socialist groups so often suffer.

There can be no dogmatism where the supreme and sole criterion of a doctrine is whether or not it conforms to the actual process of social and economic development; there can be no sectarianism when the task undertaken is to assist the organizing of the proletariat, and when, therefore, the role of the "intelligentsia" is to make special leaders from among the intelligentsia unnecessary.

Hence, notwithstanding the differences of opinion that exist among Marxists on various theoretical questions, the methods of their political activity have remained unchanged ever since the group arose.

The political activities of the Social-Democrats consist in assisting the development and organization of the working-class movement in Russia, in transforming it from its present state of sporadic attempts at protests, "riots" and strikes which lack a guiding idea, into an organized struggle of the **W H O L E** Russian working **C L A S S** directed against the bourgeois regime and striving for the expropriation of the expropriators and the

abolition of the social system which is based on the oppression of the working people. Underlying these activities is the common conviction of all Marxists that the Russian worker is the sole and natural representative of the whole toiling and exploited population of Russia.*

He is their natural representative because the exploitation of the toilers in Russia *is everywhere capitalistic in nature*, if we leave out of account the moribund remnants of serf economy; only the exploitation of the mass of producers is on a small scale, scattered and undeveloped, whereas the exploitation of the factory proletariat is on a large scale, socialized and concentrated. In the former case, exploitation is still enmeshed by medieval forms, by various political, legal and social trappings, tricks and devices, which hinder the toiler and his ideologist in perceiving the essence of the system which oppresses the toiler, and the way out of this system. In the latter case, on the contrary, exploitation is fully developed and emerges in its pure form, without any confusing minutiae. The worker can no longer fail to see that it is *capital* that is oppressing him, and that his struggle must be waged against the bourgeois *class*. And this struggle, which is a struggle for the satisfaction of his immediate economic needs, for the improvement of his material conditions,

* The man of the future in Russia is the muzhik—thought the representatives of peasant Socialism, the Narodniks in the broadest sense of the term. The man of the future in Russia is the worker—think the Social-Democrats. That is how the view of the Marxists was formulated in a certain manuscript.

inevitably demands that the workers organize, and inevitably becomes a war not against individuals, but against a *c l a s s*, the class which oppresses and crushes the toilers not only in the factories, but everywhere. That is why the factory worker is none other than the foremost representative of the whole exploited population. And in order that he may fulfil his function of representative in an organized and sustained struggle, it is not at all necessary to enthuse him with "perspectives"; all that is needed is *to make him understand his position*, to make him understand the political and economic structure of the system that oppresses him and the necessity and inevitability of class antagonisms under this system. The position of the factory worker in the general system of capitalist relations makes him the sole fighter for the emancipation of the working class, for only the higher stage of development of capitalism, large-scale machine industry, creates the material conditions and the social forces necessary for this struggle. In all other places, where the forms of development of capitalism are low, these material conditions are absent; production is scattered among thousands of tiny enterprises (and they do not cease to be scattered *enterprises* even under the most equalitarian forms of communal land*ownership*), the exploited for the most part still possess tiny enterprises, and are thus tied to the very bourgeois system they should be fighting: this retards and hinders the development of the social forces that are capable of overthrowing capitalism. Scattered, individual, petty ex-

ploitation binds the toilers to a particular place, keeps them disunited, prevents them from appreciating their class solidarity, prevents them from uniting and understanding that the cause of their exploitation is not any particular individual, but the whole economic system. Large-scale capitalism, on the contrary, inevitably severs all the workers' ties with the old society, with a particular locality and a particular exploiter; it unites them, compels them to think and puts them in conditions which enable them to commence an organized struggle. Accordingly, it is on the working class that the Social-Democrats concentrate all their attention and all their activities. When its advanced representatives have mastered the ideas of scientific Socialism, the idea of the historical role of the Russian worker, when these ideas spread far and wide, and when there arise among the workers durable organizations which will transform the present sporadic economic war of the workers into a conscious class struggle—then the Russian **WORKER**, rising at the head of all the democratic elements, will overthrow absolutism and lead the **RUSSIAN PROLETARIAT** (side by side with the proletariat of **ALL COUNTRIES**) *along the straight road of open political struggle towards the* **VICTORIOUS COMMUNIST REVOLUTION.**

The End

1894

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Appendix I

The annexed table contains the data* for the 24 budgets referred to in the text.

Composition and Budgets of 24 Typical Peasant Households in the Ostrogozhsk Uyezd

Notes on the table

1) The first twenty-one columns have been taken bodily from the *Statistical Report*. Column 22 combines the columns in the Report on: rye, wheat, oats and barley, millet and buckwheat, other grain crops, potatoes, vegetables, and hay (8 columns). How the income from grain crops (Column 23), excepting chaff and straw, was computed has been explained in the text. Column 24 combines the columns in the Report on: horses, horned cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry, hides and wool, backfat and meat, dairy produce, butter (9 columns). Columns 25-29 have been taken bodily from the Report. Columns 30-34 combine the columns in the Report on: expenditure on rye, wheat, millet and buckwheat, potatoes, vegetables, salt, butter, backfat and meat, fish, dairy produce, vodka and tea (12 columns). Column 35 combines the columns in the Report on: soap, kerosene, candles, clothing, and utensils (4 columns). The remaining columns require no explanation.

2) Column 8 was arrived at by adding together the area of rented land and the amount of arable in the allotment (for which there is a special column in the Report).

3) The bottom rows of figures in the columns "Sources of Income" and "Distribution of Expenditure" indicate the *money part of income and expenditure.* In Columns 25 to 28 and 37 to 42 the income (or expenditure) is wholly monetary. The money part was calculated (the author does not show it separately) by deducting from gross income the amount consumed by the household itself.

Appendix II

Mr. Struve quite rightly takes as the cornerstone of his criticism of Nik. —on the thesis that "Marx's doctrine of the class struggle and the state is completely foreign to the Russian political economist." I am not so bold as Mr. Krivenko and will not judge Mr. Struve's system of views on the basis of this one small (four-column) article of his (I am not acquainted with his other articles). Nor can I refrain from saying that I do not agree with all the statements he makes, and cannot therefore defend his article as a whole, but only certain fundamental propositions in it. At any rate, his remark is perfectly true: failure to understand the class struggle inherent in capitalist society is indeed Mr. Nik. —on's *basic error*. The correction of this one error would be sufficient to cause Social-Democratic conclusions necessarily to follow even from his theoretical statements and investigations. To overlook the class struggle is indeed to reveal a gross misunderstanding of Marxism, a misunderstanding for which Mr. Nik. —on must all the more be blamed because he is in general anxious to be taken as a

strict adherent of Marx's principles. Can anyone with the least knowledge of Marx deny that the doctrine of the class struggle is the pivot of his whole system of views?

Mr. Nik. —on might, of course, have accepted Marx's theory with the exception of this point, on the grounds, let us say, that it does not conform with the facts of Russian history and reality. But then, in the first place, he could not possibly have said that Marx's theory explains our order of things; he could not even have spoken of this theory and of capitalism, because it would have been necessary to reconstruct the theory and to work out a concept of a different capitalism, in which antagonistic relations and the struggle of classes were not inherent. At any rate, he should have explicitly made such a reservation and explained why, having accepted *A* in Marxism, he refuses to accept *B*. Mr. Nik. —on did not even try to do this.

And Mr. Struve quite rightly concluded that Mr. Nik. —on's failure to understand the class struggle makes him a *utopian*, for anybody who ignores the class struggle in capitalist society eo ipso entirely ignores the real content of the social and political life of this society and, as regards the realization of desiderata, inevitably condemns himself to hovering in the sphere of pious wishes. His failure to understand the class struggle makes him a *reactionary*, for appeals to "society" and to the "state," that is, to the ideologists and politicians of the bourgeoisie, can only confuse the Socialists, lead them to accept the worst

enemies of the proletariat as their allies, and hamper the workers' struggle for emancipation instead of helping to strengthen, clarify and better organize that struggle.

Since we have mentioned Mr. Struve's article, we cannot refrain from dealing with Mr. Nik. —on's reply in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 6.*

"It appears," argues Mr. Nik. —on, citing figures to show the slow growth in the number of factory workers, a growth which lags behind the growth of population, "that in our country capitalism, far from fulfilling its 'historical mission,' is itself setting limits to its own development. That, incidentally, is why those who seek 'a path of development for their fatherland which will be different from that which Western Europe pursued and still pursues' are a thousand times right." (And this is written by a man who admits that Russia is pursuing this very capitalist path!) The reason why Mr. Nik. —on considers that this "historical mission" is not being fulfilled is because "the economic tendency hostile to the village community (i.e., capitalism) is destroying

* Generally speaking, Mr. Nik. —on, in his articles in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, tries hard, it seems, to prove that he is not as remote from petty-bourgeois radicalism as one might think; that he too is capable of discerning in the rise of a peasant bourgeoisie (No. 6, p. 118—the spread among the "peasants" of improved implements, phosphates, etc.) symptoms indicating that "the *peasantry* itself" (the peasantry that is being expropriated wholesale?) "realizes the necessity of escaping from the position it finds itself in."

the very foundations of its existence without bringing that modicum of combining value which is so characteristic of Western Europe and which is beginning to manifest itself with particular force in North America."

In other words, what we have here is the official argument against the Social-Democrats that was invented by the celebrated Mr. V. V., who regarded capitalism from the standpoint of a government official deciding a problem of state—"introduction of capitalism into the life of the people." If it is fulfilling its "mission," it may be allowed; if not, "stop it!" Apart from all the other virtues of this clever argument, the notion of capitalism's "mission" conceived by Mr. V. V., and apparently by Mr. Nik. —on, is impossibly and preposterously false and narrow. And again, of course, these gentlemen unceremoniously ascribe their own narrowness of conception to the Social-Democrats, who may be maligned like the dead, seeing that the legal press is closed to them!

As Marx saw it, the progressive, revolutionary work of capitalism consists in the fact that, by socializing labour, it at the same time "disciplines, unites and organizes the working class" by the very mechanism of the process, trains it for the struggle, organizes its "revolt," unites it for the "expropriation of the expropriators," for the seizure of political power and for wresting the means of production from the "few usurpers" and turning them over to society (*Capital*, p. 650).[62]

That is how Marx formulates it.

Of the "number of factory workers" there is not even a mention here, of course: Marx speaks of the concentration of the means of production and the socialization of labour. It is quite clear that there is nothing in common between these criteria and the "number of factory workers."

But our exceptionalist interpreters of Marx misinterpret this to mean that the socialization of labour under capitalism amounts to the performance of work by factory workers under one roof, and that therefore the progressiveness of the work of capitalism is to be measured by . . . the number of factory workers!!! If the number of factory workers is increasing, capitalism is doing its progressive work well; if the number is decreasing, it is "fulfilling its historical mission badly" (p. 103 of Mr. Nik.—on's article), and it behoves the "intelligentsia" "to seek different paths for their fatherland."

And so the Russian intelligentsia sets out to seek for the "different paths." It has been seeking them for decades, and finding them, trying with might and main to prove* that capitalism is a

* These arguments are wasted, not because they are wrong—the ruin, impoverishment and starvation of the people are unquestionable and inevitable concomitants of capitalism—but because they are addressed to the thin air. "Society," even under the cloak of democracy, furthers the interests of the plutocracy, and it is not to be expected, of course, that the plutocracy will take up the cudgels against capitalism. The "government". . . I will cite the comment of an opponent, Mr. N. K. Mikhailovsky: however little we know the programs of our government, he once wrote, we know them enough to be certain that the "socialization of labour" has no part in them.

"false" line of development, for it leads to unemployment and crises. We faced a crisis, they say, in 1880, and again in 1893; it is time to leave this path, for obviously things are going badly with us.

The Russian bourgeoisie, for its part, like the cat in the fable, "listens but goes on eating": of course things are going "badly" when it is no longer possible to make fabulous profits. And so it sings in chorus with the liberals and radicals and thanks to released and cheaper capital, actively sets about building new railways. Things are going badly with "us" because in the old places "we" have already picked the people clean and have now to enter the field of industrial capital, which cannot enrich us as much as merchant capital. And so "we" will go to the eastern and northern border regions of European Russia, where "primitive accumulation," which yields hundreds per cent of profit, is still possible, where the bourgeois disintegration of the peasantry is still far from complete. The intelligentsia perceives all this and constantly admonishes us that "we" are again heading for a crash. And a new crash is really approaching. The bulk of the small capitalists are being forced to the wall by the big capitalists; the mass of peasants are being squeezed out of agriculture, which is increasingly passing into the hands of the bourgeoisie; the sea of poverty, unemployment and death by starvation is becoming immense—and the "intelligentsia," with a clear conscience, point to their prophecies and incessantly bewail the false path, citing the absence

of foreign markets as proof of the instability of our capitalism.

But the Russian bourgeoisie "listens but goes on eating"; while the "intelligentsia" is seeking new paths, it is going in for gigantic construction of railways to its colonies, there creating a market for itself, introducing the charms of the bourgeois system to the young countries, there too creating an industrial and agricultural bourgeoisie at an exceptionally rapid rate, and casting the mass of the producers into the ranks of the chronically starving unemployed.

Can it really be that the Socialists will continue to confine themselves to grumbling about wrong paths and try to prove that capitalism is unstable . . . by the slow growth in the number of factory workers!!?

Before discussing this childish idea,* I must mention that Mr. Nik. —on quoted the criticized passage from Mr. Struve's article very inaccurately. What the latter states in his article is literally the following:

"When the author (i.e., Mr. Nik. —on) points to the difference in the occupational composition

* How can this idea be called anything but childish, when the progressive work of capitalism is judged not by the degree of socialization of labour, but by such a fluctuating index of the development of only *one* branch of national labour! Everybody knows that the number of workers cannot be anything but extremely inconstant under the capitalist mode of production, and that it depends upon a host of secondary factors, such as crises, the size of the reserve army of labour, the degree of exploitation of labour, the degree of intensity of labour, and so on and so forth.

of the Russian and American populations—he says that in Russia 80 per cent of the total gainfully-employed population (erwerbsthätigen) are engaged in agriculture, and in the United States only 44 per cent—he fails to observe that the capitalist development of Russia will work to obliterate this difference between 80 per cent and 44 per cent; that, one might say, is its historical mission."

It may be held that the *word* "mission" is very inappropriate here, but Mr. Struve's idea is clear: Mr. Nik. —on failed to observe that the capitalist development of Russia (he himself admits that this development is really a capitalist one) will reduce the rural population, when as a matter of fact this is a general law of capitalism. Consequently, to dispose of this objection, Mr. Nik. —on should have shown *either* 1) that he had not overlooked this tendency of capitalism, *or* 2) that capitalism has no such tendency.

Instead, Mr. Nik. —on sets about analyzing the figures for the number of our factory workers (one per cent of the population, according to his estimate). But was Mr. Struve speaking of factory workers? Does the 20 per cent of the population in Russia and the 56 per cent in America represent factory workers? Are the terms "factory workers" and "population not engaged in agriculture" identical? Can it be denied that the proportion of the population engaged in agriculture is diminishing in Russia too?

Having made this correction, which I consider all the more necessary because Mr. Krivenko has already garbled this passage once before in this

very magazine, let us pass to Mr. Nik. —on's idea itself, namely, that "our capitalism is fulfilling its mission badly."

Firstly, it is absurd to identify the number of factory workers with the number of workers engaged in capitalist production, as the author of the *Essays*[63] does. This is repeating (*and even aggravating*) the error of the Russian petty-bourgeois economists when they directly date the beginning of capitalism from large-scale machine industry. Are not the millions of Russian kustars who work for the merchants, with the latter's material and for ordinary wages, engaged in capitalist production? Do not the farm hands and day labourers in agriculture receive wages from their employers, and do they not surrender surplus value to them? Are not the workers engaged in the building industry (which has been rapidly developing in our country since the Reform) subjected to capitalist exploitation? And so on.*

* I here confine myself to criticizing Mr. Nik. —on's *method* of judging the "combining value of capitalism" by the number of factory workers. I cannot undertake an analysis of the figures, because I have not at hand the sources used by Mr. Nik. —on. I cannot, however, refrain from noting that he has not selected these sources very happily. He first takes from the *Compiled Military Statistics* figures for 1865 and from the *Directory of Mills and Factories* of 1894 figures for 1890. The number of workers he arrives at (exclusive of mine workers) is 829,573 and 875,764, respectively. The increase of 5.5 per cent is much less than the increase of population (from 61,420,000 to 91,000,000, or 48.1 per cent). But on *the next page* different figures are taken: both for 1865 and 1890 from the *Directory* of 1893. According to these figures, the number of workers is 392,718 and 716,792, respectively—an increase of 82 per cent. But

Secondly, it is absurd to compare the number of factory workers (1,400,000) with the total population and to express the ratio in the form of a percentage. That is simply comparing incommensurables: the able-bodied population with the non-able-bodied, persons engaged in the production of material values with the "ideological professions," and so on.

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this does not include industries paying excise duties, in which the number of workers (p. 104) was 186,053 in 1865 and 144,332 in 1890. Combining these figures with the preceding ones we arrive at the following total numbers of workers (exclusive of mine workers): 578,771 in 1865 and 861,124 in 1890. An increase of 48.7 per cent, at a time when the population increased by 48.1 per cent. Thus in the space of five pages the author quotes figures some of which show an increase of 5 per cent and others of 48 per cent! And on the basis of such contradictory figures he judges the instability of our capitalism!

And then why did not the author take the figures for the number of workers which he quotes in the *Essays* (Tables XI and XII), and from which we see that the number of workers increased by 12-13 per cent in *three years* (1886-1889), an increase that far outstrips the growth of population? The author may perhaps say that the interval of time was too short. But then, in the first place, these figures are homogeneous, comparable and more reliable; and in the second place, did not the author use these same figures, despite the short interval of time, to form a judgment of the growth of factory industry?

It is clear that the figures for one branch of national labour alone are bound to be shaky when one takes so fluctuating an index of the state of that branch as the number of workers. Just think what an infinitely naive dreamer one must be to hope, on the basis of such figures, that our capitalism will collapse, crumble to dust of itself, without a stubborn and desperate struggle, and with these figures to contest the unquestionable domination and development of capitalism in all branches of national labour!

Does not each factory worker maintain a certain number of non-working members of his family? Do not the factory workers maintain—apart from their employers and a whole flock of traders—a host of soldiers, government officials and similar gentry, whom you lump with the agricultural population, contrasting this hotchpotch with the factory population? And then, are there not in Russia such trades as fishing and so forth, which it is again absurd to contrast with factory industry and to combine with agriculture? If you wanted to get an idea of the occupational composition of the population of Russia, you should, firstly, have singled out into a special group the population engaged in the production of material values (excluding, consequently, the non-working population, on the one hand, and soldiers, government officials, priests, etc., on the other); and, secondly, you should have attempted to class them under the various branches of national labour. If the data for this was not available, you should have refrained from undertaking such calculations,* instead of talking nonsense about

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* Mr. Nik. —on attempted such a calculation in the *Essays*, but very unsuccessfully. On p. 302, we read:

"An attempt was recently made to determine the total number of free workers in the fifty gubernias of European Russia (S. A. Korolenko, *Free Hired Labour*, St. Petersburg 1892). An investigation made by the Department of Agriculture estimates the able-bodied rural population in the fifty gubernias of European Russia at 35,712,000, whereas the total number of workers required in agriculture and in the manufacturing, mining, transport and other industries is estimated at only 30,124,000. Thus the number of absolutely superfluous workers reaches the huge figure of 5,588,000,

one per cent (??!!) of the population being engaged in factory industry.

Thirdly—and this is the chief and most outrageous distortion of Marx's theory of the progressive

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which, together with their families, according to the accepted standard, would amount to no less than 15,000,000 persons." (Repeated on p. 341.)

If we turn to this "investigation," we shall find that only the free hired labour employed by the landlords was "investigated," and that Mr. S. Korolenko appended to the investigation an "agricultural and industrial survey" of European Russia. This survey makes an attempt (not on the basis of an "investigation," but on the basis of old available data) to class the working population of European Russia by occupation. The results Mr. S. A. Korolenko arrives at are as follows: the total number of workers in the fifty gubernias of European Russia is 35,712,000, engaged in the following occupations:

Agriculture		27,435,400	30,124 thous.
Cultivation of special crops		1,466,400	
Factory and mining industry		1,222,700	
Jews		1,400,400	
Lumbering	about	2,000,000	
Stock breeding	"	1,000,000	
Railways	"	200,000	
Fishing	"	200,000	
Local and migratory trades, hunting, trapping, etc. — the remainder		787,200	
Total		35,712,100	

Thus Mr. Korolenko (rightly or wrongly) classed *all* the workers by occupation, but Mr. Nik. —on arbitrarily takes the first headings and talks about 5,588,000 "absolutely superfluous" (??) workers!

Apart from this flaw we cannot refrain from noting

and revolutionary work of capitalism—where did you get the idea that the "combining value" of capitalism is expressed in uniting only the factory workers? Can it be that you borrow your idea of Marxism from the articles on the socialization of labour in the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*? Can it be that you too identify it with work performed under one roof?

But no. It would appear that Nik. —on cannot be accused of this, because he accurately describes the socialization of labour by capitalism on the second page of his article in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 6, correctly indicating both tokens of this socialization: 1) work for the whole of society, and 2) the uniting of individual labourers so as to obtain the product of common labour. But if that is so, why judge the "mission" of capitalism by the number of factory workers, when this "mission" is fulfilled by the development of capitalism and the socialization of labour in general, by the creation of a proletariat in general, in relation to which the factory workers play the role only of a vanguard. It cannot be denied, of course, that the revolutionary movement of the proletariat also depends on the

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that Mr. Korolenko's estimates are extremely rough and inaccurate: the number of agricultural workers is determined by one general standard for the whole of Russia; the unproductive population has not been classed separately (under this head Mr. Korolenko, in deference to official anti-Semitism, classed . . . the *Jews*! There must be more than 1,400,000 unproductive workers: traders, paupers, vagabonds, criminals, etc.); the number of kustars (the last heading—migratory and local trades) is preposterously low, etc. It would have been better not to quote such estimates at all.

number of these workers, on their concentration, on the degree of their development, etc.; but all this does not give us the slightest right *to identify the "combining value" of capitalism with the n u m b e r of factory workers.* That would be narrowing down Marx's idea impossibly.

I will give an example. In his pamphlet *Zur Wohnungsfrage** Frederick Engels speaks of German industry and points out that in no other country—he is referring only to Western Europe—do there exist so many wageworkers who own a garden or a field as in Germany. "*Rural domestic industry carried on in conjunction with horticulture or . . . agriculture,*" he says, "*forms the broad basis of Germany's new large-scale industry.*" This domestic industry grows extensive with the growing distress of the German small peasant (as is the case in Russia, let us add), but the **CONJUNCTION** of industry with agriculture is the basis not of the **WELL-BEING** of the domestic producer, the kustar, but, on the contrary, of his greater **OPPRESSION.** Being tied to his locality, he is compelled to accept any price, and therefore surrenders to the capitalist not only surplus value but a large part of his wages as well (as is the case in Russia, with her vast development of the domestic system of large-scale production). "*That is one side of the matter,*" Engels continues, "*but it also has its reverse side. . . . With the expansion of domestic industry one peasant area after another is being dragged into the present-day industrial movement. It is this revolutionization of*

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* *The Housing Question.—Tr.*

the rural areas by domestic industry which spreads the industrial revolution in Germany over a far wider territory than is the case in England and France. . . . This explains why in Germany, in contrast to England and France, the revolutionary working-class movement has spread so tremendously over the greater part of the country instead of being confined exclusively to the urban centres. And this in turn explains the tranquil, certain and irresistible progress of the movement. It is perfectly clear that in Germany a victorious rising in the capital and in the other big cities will be possible only when the majority of the smaller towns and a great part of the rural districts have become ripe for the revolutionary change.[64]

So you see, it appears that not only the "combining value of capitalism," but even the success of the working-class movement depends not only on the number of factory workers, but also on the number of . . . *kustars*! Yet our exceptionalists, ignoring the purely capitalist organization of the vast majority of the Russian kustar trades, contrast them, as a sort of "popular" industry, to capitalism and judge "the percentage of the population which is at the direct disposal of capitalism" by the number of factory workers! This is reminiscent of the following argument by Mr. Krivenko: the Marxists want all attention to be directed to the factory workers; but as there are only one million of them out of one hundred million, they constitute only a small corner of life, and to consecrate oneself to it is just like confining oneself to work in guild or charitable institutions (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 12). Mill and factories are just such a small corner of life a

guild and charitable institutions!! What genius, Mr. Krivenko! No doubt it is the guild institutions that produce goods for the whole of society? No doubt it is the state of affairs in the guild institutions that explains the exploitation and expropriation of the toilers? No doubt it is in the guild institutions that one must look for the advanced representatives of the proletariat who are capable of raising the banner of emancipation of the workers?

It is not surprising to hear such things from the lips of minor bourgeois philosophers; but when you meet the same sort of thing in the writings of Mr. Nik. —on, it is really too bad.

On p. 393 of *Capital*,[65] Marx quotes figures showing the composition of the English population. In 1861 there were 20,000,000 people in England and Wales in all. Of these, 1,605,440 persons were employed in the main branches of factory industry.* Furthermore, there were 1,208,648 members of the servant class, and in a footnote to the second edition Marx refers to the very rapid growth of this class. Now just imagine "Marxists" in England who, in order to judge the "combining value of capitalism," were to divide 20,000,000 by 1,600,000!! The result would be 8 per cent—*less than one-twelfth*!!!

* There were 642,607 persons employed in the textile, stocking making and lace industries (in our country tens of thousands of women engaged in stocking making and lace making are incredibly exploited by the "tradeswomen" for whom they work. Wages are sometimes as low as *three* [*sic*!] kopeks a day! Do you mean to say, Mr. Nik. —on, that they are not "at the direct disposal of capitalism"?), 565,835 persons employed in coal mines and metal mines and 396,998 persons employed in all metal works and manufactures.

How can one speak of the "mission" of capitalism when it has not united even one-twelfth of the population, and when, moreover, there is a more rapid increase in the "domestic slave" class—representing a dead loss of "national labour," which shows that "we," the English, are following a "false path"! Is it not clear that "we" must "seek different," non-capitalist "paths of development for our fatherland"?!

There is still another point in Mr. Nik.—on's argument: when he says that our capitalism does not possess that combining value which is "so characteristic of Western Europe and which is *beginning to manifest itself with particular force in North America*," he is apparently referring to the working-class movement. And so, we must seek different paths because our capitalism does not lead to a working-class movement. This argument, it seems to me, was anticipated by Mr. Mikhailovsky. Marx operated with a ready-made proletariat—he admonished the Marxists. And when a Marxist told him that all he saw in poverty was poverty, he replied that, as usual, this remark was taken bodily from Marx, but that if we turned to this passage in *The Poverty of Philosophy* we would find that it is not applicable in our case and that our poverty is just poverty. But, as a matter of fact, you will find nothing of the kind in *The Poverty of Philosophy*. Marx there says of the Communists of the old school that they saw in poverty nothing but poverty without seeing in it the revolutionary, destructive side, which would overthrow the old society.[66] Evidently, what Mr. Mikhailovsky takes as grounds for asserting that

it is not applicable in our case is the absence of any "manifestation" of a working-class movement. In reference to this argument, let us remark, firstly, that only a very superficial acquaintance with the facts could give rise to the idea that Marx operated with a ready-made proletariat. Marx's Communist program was drawn up before 1848. What working-class movement* was there in Germany then? There was not even political liberty at that time, and the activities of the Communists were confined to secret circles (as in our country today). The Social-Democratic labour movement, which made the revolutionary and combining role of capitalism quite clear to everybody, began two decades later, when the doctrine of scientific Socialism had definitely taken shape, when large-scale industry had become more widespread and members of talented and energetic disseminators of this doctrine among the working class had arisen. In addition to presenting historical facts in a false light and forgetting the vast amount of work expended by the Socialists in lending consciousness and organization to the working-class movement, our philosophers foist upon Marx the most senseless fatalistic views. They make out that, in his opinion, the organization and association of the workers proceed of their own accord, and that, consequently, if we see capitalism but do not see a working-class movement, that is

* How small the working class at that time was may be judged from the fact that *27 years later*, in 1875, Marx wrote that "the majority of the toiling people in Germany consists of peasants, and not of proletarians."[67] That is what "operating (??) with a ready-made proletariat" comes down to!

because capitalism is not fulfilling its mission, and not because we are still doing too little in the matter of organization and propaganda among the workers. This cowardly petty-bourgeois artifice of our exceptionalist philosophers is not even worth refuting: it is refuted by all the activities of the Social-Democrats in all countries; it is refuted by every public speech made by any Marxist. Social-Democracy—as Kautsky very justly remarks—is a combination of the working-class movement with Socialism. And in order that the progressive work of capitalism may "manifest" itself in our country too, our Socialists must set to work with all their might and main; they must work out a more detailed Marxist conception of Russian history and Russian conditions, and make a more concrete investigation of all the forms of class struggle and exploitation, which are particularly involved and masked in Russia. They must further popularize this theory and make it known to the worker; they must help the worker to assimilate it and devise the most **SUITABLE** *form of organization under our conditions for the dissemination of Social-Democratic ideas and the welding of the workers into a political force.* And the Russian Social-Democrats, far from ever having said that they have already completed, fulfilled this work of ideologists of the working class (there is no end to this work), have always stressed the fact that they are only just beginning it, and that much effort by many, many persons will be required to create anything at all lasting.

Besides its unsatisfactory and preposterously narrow conception of the Marxian theory, this com-

mon objection that progressive work is lacking in our capitalism is based, it seems to us, on the absurd idea of a mythical "popular system."

When the "peasants" in the notorious "village community" are splitting up into paupers and rich, into representatives of the proletariat and representatives of capital (especially merchant capital), they refuse to see that this is embryonic, medieval capitalism, and, evading the political-economic structure of rural life, they talk, in their search for "different paths for the fatherland," about changes in the form of peasant land*ownership*, with which they unpardonably confuse the form of economic organization, as though a purely bourgeois disintegration of the peasantry were not in full swing within our "equalitarian village community." And at a time when, in its development, this capitalism grows out of the narrow forms of medieval, rural capitalism, shatters the feudal power of the land and compels the hungry peasant, who has long ago been picked clean, to abandon the land to the community to be divided up on equalitarian lines among the triumphant kulaks, and to go and work elsewhere, to wander over the face of Russia, unemployed much of the time, and to hire himself now to a landlord, now to a railway contractor, and now again as a labourer in the town, or as an agricultural labourer to a rich peasant, and so on; at a time when this "peasant," changing masters all over Russia, sees that wherever he goes he is subjected to the most shameful robbery; when he sees other paupers like himself being robbed; when he sees that it is not necessarily the "squire" who robs him but also his

"brother muzhik," if the latter has money to purchase labour power; when he sees how everywhere the government serves his bosses, restricting the rights of the workers and suppressing as riots every attempt to protect their elementary rights; when he sees that the labour of the Russian worker is becoming more and more arduous and wealth and luxury growing more and more rapidly, while the condition of the worker becomes steadily worse, expropriation more intense and unemployment a normal thing—at a time like this our critics of Marxism are seeking different paths for the fatherland; at a time like this they are occupied in settling the profound question whether we can grant that the work of capitalism is progressive, seeing how slow is the growth in the number of factory workers, or whether we should not reject the path of our capitalism and deem it false, because it is "fulfilling its historical mission badly, very, very badly."

A lofty and broadly humane occupation, is it not?

And what narrow doctrinaires these wicked Marxists are when they say that to seek different paths for the fatherland when capitalist exploitation of the toilers exists all over Russia is to take refuge from realities in the sphere of utopia, and when they find that it is not our capitalism which is fulfilling its mission badly, but rather the Russian Socialists, who refuse to realize that to dream that the age-old economic struggle of the antagonistic classes of Russian society will die down is sheer Manilovism,[68] who refuse to realize that we must strive to lend organization and consciousness to this struggle,

and for this purpose must undertake Social-Democratic work.

In conclusion, we cannot refrain from noting another attack made by Mr. Nik. —on on Mr. Struve in this same issue, No. 6, of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*.

"We cannot help drawing attention," Mr. Nik. —on says, "to a certain peculiarity in Mr. Struve's methods of controversy. He was writing for the German public, in a serious German magazine; but the methods he employed seem entirely inappropriate. We may take it that not only the German but even the Russian public has grown to 'man's estate,' and will not be impressed by all the 'bugbears' in which his article abounds. 'Utopia,' 'reactionary program' and similar expressions are to be met with in every column. But today, alas, such 'terrible words' absolutely fail to produce the effect on which Mr. Struve apparently counts" (p. 128).

Let us try to examine whether "inappropriate methods" really have been employed in this controversy between Messrs. Nik. —on and Struve, and, if so, by whom.

Mr. Struve is accused of resorting to "inappropriate methods" on the grounds that in a serious article he tries to impress the public with "bugbears" and "terrible words."

Resorting to "bugbears" and "terrible words" means giving a description of your opponent which is trenchant, but at the same time not clearly and precisely motivated, does not necessarily follow from your standpoint (a definitely stated standpoint), but is simply the outcome of a desire to abuse and vilify.

Obviously, it is only this last feature which turns a trenchant epithet into a "bugbear." Mr. Slonimsky spoke trenchantly of Mr. Nik. —on, but as he clearly and definitely formulated his standpoint, the standpoint of an ordinary liberal who is absolutely incapable of understanding the bourgeois character of the present order of things, and quite explicitly formulated his phenomenal conclusions, he may be accused of anything you like, but not of "inappropriate methods." Mr. Nik. —on, for his part, spoke trenchantly of Mr. Slonimsky, quoting, among other things, in admonition and for his edification, Marx's words—which have been "justified in our country too" (as Mr. Nik. —on admits)—about the *reactionary* and *utopian* character of the defence of small kustar industry and small peasant landownership, which Mr. Slonimsky wants, and accusing him of "narrow-mindedness," "*naïveté*," and the like. Look, Mr. Nik. —on's article "abounds" in the same epithets (underscored) as Mr. Struve's; but we cannot speak of "inappropriate methods" in this case, because it is all motivated, it all follows from the author's definite standpoint and system of views, which may be false, but which, if accepted, necessarily lead one to regard his opponent as a naive, narrow-minded and reactionary utopian.

Let us see how matters stand with Mr. Struve's article. Accusing Mr. Nik. —on of utopianism, from which a reactionary program is bound to follow, and of naïveté, he quite clearly indicates the grounds which led him to such an opinion. First: desiring the "socialization of production," Mr. Nik. —on "appeals to society" (*sic*!) "and the state."

This "proves that Marx's doctrine of the class struggle and the state is completely foreign to the Russian political economist." Our state is the "representative of the ruling classes." Second: "If we contrast to *real* capitalism an *imaginary* economic system, which *must* come about simply because we *want it to*, in other words, if we desire to socialize production without capitalism, this is only evidence of a naive conception which does not conform to history." With the development of capitalism, the elimination of natural economy and the diminution of the rural population, "the modern state will emerge from the twilight in which it is still enveloped in our patriarchal times (we are speaking of Russia) and step into the clear light of the open class struggle, and other forces and factors will have to be sought for the socialization of production."

Well, is this not a sufficiently clear and precise motivation? Can one dispute the truth of Mr. Struve's description of the author's views? Did Mr. Nik. —on really take account of the class struggle which is inherent in capitalist society? He did not. He speaks of society and the state, and forgets this struggle, excludes it. He says, for example, that the state supported capitalism instead of socializing labour through the village community, and so on. He evidently believes that the state might have behaved this way or that, and, consequently, that it stands *above classes*. Is it not clear, then, that to accuse Mr. Struve of having resorted to "bugbears" is a *crying* injustice? Is it not clear that a man who believes that our state is a class state cannot but regard as a naive and reactionary utopian one who

appeals to that state to socialize labour, that is, to abolish the ruling classes? More, when you accuse your opponent of resorting to "bugbears," and at the same time *say nothing* about the views that led him to his opinion, despite the fact that he has clearly formulated these views; and when, moreover, you accuse him of this in a censored magazine, where these views cannot appear—ought one not rather to regard this as "an absolutely inappropriate method"?

Let us proceed. Mr. Struve's second argument is formulated no less clearly. That the socialization of labour without capitalism, through the village community, is an imaginary system, cannot be doubted for it does not exist in reality. This reality is described by Mr. Nik. —on himself as follows: prior to 1861 the productive units were the "family" and the "village community" (*Essays*, pp. 106-07). This "small, scattered, self-sufficing production could not develop to any considerable extent, and it is therefore extremely routine and little productive in its character." The subsequent change consisted in the fact that "the social division of labour penetrated ever deeper and deeper." Consequently, capitalism shattered the narrow bounds of the earlier productive units and socialized labour throughout society. *This socialization of labour by our capitalism is admitted by Mr. Nik. —on too.* Therefore, in wanting to base the socialization of labour, not on capitalism, which *has already socialized labour*, but on the village community, *the breakdown of which was the first to bring about the socialization of labour throughout society*, he is a

reactionary utopian. That is Mr. Struve's train of thought. One may regard it as true or false, but it cannot be denied that his trenchant criticism of Mr. Nik. —on followed logically and inevitably from this opinion, so that there can be no talk of "bugbears."

More, when Mr. Nik. —on concludes his controversy with Mr. Struve by attributing to his opponent the desire to divorce the peasantry from the land ("if by a progressive program is meant the divorcement of the peasantry from the land . . . then the author of the *Essays* is a conservative"), despite Mr. Struve's explicit statement that he desires the socialization of labour, desires it through capitalism, and therefore desires to base himself on the forces which will become apparent in "the clear light of the open class struggle"—one can only say that this version is diametrically opposed to the truth. And if one bears in mind that Mr. Struve could not in the censored press speak of the forces which are becoming apparent in the clear light of the open class struggle, and that, consequently, Mr. Nik. —on's opponent was gagged—it can scarcely be denied that Mr. Nik. —on's method is absolutely "inappropriate."

Appendix III

When I speak of the narrow conception of Marxism, I have the Marxists themselves in mind. One cannot help remarking in this connection that Marxism is most atrociously narrowed and garbled when our liberals and radicals undertake to expound it in the pages of the legal press. What an exposition it is! Only think how this revolutionary doctrine must be mutilated in order to fit it into the Procrustean bed of the Russian censorship! Yet our publicists lightheartedly perform that operation! Marxism as they expound it is practically reduced to a doctrine of how under the capitalist system individual property, based on the labour of the owner, undergoes its dialectical development, how it becomes converted into its negation, and is then socialized. And with a serious mien, they assume that the whole content of Marxism lies in this "scheme" and ignore all the specific features of its sociological method, the doctrine of the class struggle, and the direct purpose of the enquiry, namely, to disclose all the forms of antagonism and exploitation in order to help the proletariat get rid of them. It is not surprising that the result is something so pale

and wan that our radicals begin to bewail the poor Russian Marxists. We should think so! Russian absolutism and Russian reaction would not be absolutism and reaction if it were possible, while they exist, to expound Marxism fully, accurately and completely, setting forth its conclusions without reservation! And if our liberals and radicals knew Marxism properly (if only, from German literature), they would be ashamed to disfigure it so in the pages of the censored press. If a theory cannot be expounded—keep silent, or make the reservation that you are expounding it far from completely, that you are omitting what is most essential in it; but when you are expounding only fragments how can you say that it is narrow?

That, indeed, is the only reason for the curious fact, possible only in Russia, that people are counted Marxists who have no conception of the class struggle, of the antagonisms that are necessarily inherent in capitalist society, and of the development of these antagonisms; who have no idea of the revolutionary role of the proletariat; who even directly come forward with bourgeois projects, provided only they contain such catchwords as "money economy," its "necessity," and similar expressions, to regard which as specifically Marxist requires all the intellectual profundity of a Mr. Mikhailovsky.

Marx, on the other hand, considered that the whole value of his theory lay in the fact that it is "in its essence critical* and revolutionary."[69]

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* Note that Marx is speaking here of materialist criticism, which alone he regards as scientific—a criticism, that is, which compares the political, legal, social, living and

And this latter quality is indeed completely and unconditionally characteristic of *Marxism*, for this theory directly sets out to *disclose* all the forms of antagonism and exploitation in modern society, to trace their evolution, demonstrate their transient character, the inevitability of their transformation into a different form, *and thus help the proletariat as quickly and easily as possible to put an end to all exploitation.* The irresistible power of attraction that draws the Socialists of all countries to this theory lies indeed in the fact that it combines strict and profound science (being the last word in social science) with revolutionism, and combines them not by chance, not only because the founder of the doctrine combined in his own person the qualities of a scientist and a revolutionary, but intrinsically and inseparably, in the theory itself. For, indeed, the purpose of theory, the aim of science, as directly laid down here, is to assist the oppressed class in its actual economic struggle.

> "*We do not say to the world: Cease struggling—your whole struggle is futile. All we do is to provide it with a true slogan of the struggle.*"[70]

Hence, according to Marx, the direct purpose of science is to provide a true slogan of the struggle,

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other facts with economics, with the system of relations of production, with the interests of the classes that inevitably spring from all antagonistic social relations. That Russian social relations are antagonistic, nobody could surely doubt. But nobody has yet endeavoured to take them as a basis for *such* a criticism.

that is, to be able to present this struggle objectively, as the product of a definite system of relations of production, to be able to *understand* the necessity of this struggle, its meaning, course and conditions of development. It is impossible to provide a "slogan of the struggle" unless every separate form of the struggle is minutely studied, unless every one of its steps in the transition from one form to another is traced, so as to make it possible to define the situation at any given moment, without losing sight of the general character of the struggle and its general aim, namely, the complete and final abolition of all exploitation and all oppression.

Try to compare with Marx's "critical and revolutionary" theory the insipid trash which "our well-known" N. K. Mikhailovsky set forth in his "criticism" and tilted at, and you will be astonished that there can really be people who regard themselves as "ideologists of the toiling class," yet confine themselves . . . to that "flat disc" into which our publicists transform the Marxian theory by expunging everything that is vital in it.

Try to compare with the demands of this theory our Narodnik literature, which, after all, is also prompted by the desire to be the ideological leader of the toiler, a literature devoted to the history and to the present state of our economic system in general and of the peasantry in particular, and you will be astonished that Socialists could remain satisfied with such a theory, which confined itself to studying and describing distress and to moralizing over it. Serfdom is depicted, not as a definite form of economic organization which gives rise to exploitation of

such and such a kind, to such and such antagonistic classes, to such and such political, legal and other systems, but simply as an abuse of power on the part of the landlords and an injustice to the peasants. The Peasant Reform is depicted, not as a clash of definite economic forms and of definite economic classes, but as a measure taken by the authorities, who "chose" a "false path" by mistake, despite their very best intentions. Post-Reform Russia is depicted as a deviation from the true path, accompanied by the distress of the toiler, and not as a definite system of antagonistic relations of production with such and such a course of development.

There can be no doubt now, however, that this theory is utterly discredited, and the sooner Russian Socialists realize that with the present level of knowledge there can be no revolutionary theory except Marxism, the sooner they devote all their efforts to applying this theory to Russia, theoretically and practically—the surer and quicker will be the success of revolutionary work.

To give a clear illustration of the corruption the "friends of the people" have caused in the "meagre Russian thought" of today by their call to the intelligentsia to exert an uplifting influence on the "people" so as to "create" a real and proper industry, etc.—let us cite the opinion of people who hold views sharply distinct from ours, namely, the "Narodopravtsi," those direct and immediate successors of the Narodovoltsi. See the pamphlet, *An Urgent Question*, 1894, published by the Narodnoye Pravo Party.

After giving a splendid rebuttal to the kind of Narodniks who say that "under no circumstances, not even on the condition of broad liberty, must Russia part with her economic organization, which ensures (!) the toiler an independent place in production," and that "what we need is not political reforms but systematic and planned economic reforms," the Narodopravtsi go on to say:

"We are not defenders of the bourgeoisie, still less are we admirers of its ideals; but if a malicious fate were to present the people with the choice of 'systematic economic reforms' under the protection of the Zemsky Nachalniks, who would zealously guard them from the encroachments of the bourgeoisie, or of the bourgeoisie on the basis of political liberty, that is, under conditions which would *ensure* the people the organized defence of their interests—we think that in choosing the latter the people would clearly be the gainer. We have no 'political reforms' which threaten to deprive the people of their fictitious independent economic organization; what we do have is what everybody everywhere is accustomed to regard as a bourgeois policy, expressed in the gross exploitation of the labour of the people. We have neither broad liberty nor narrow liberty; what we do have is the protection of caste interests, of which the agrarians and capitalists of constitutional countries have ceased to dream. We have no 'bourgeois parliamentarism'—society is not allowed within gunshot range of administration; what we do have are Messrs. the Naidenovs, Morozovs, Kazis and Byelovs,[71] who demand that a Chinese Wall be set up for the defence of their interests, side by

side with representatives of 'our loyal nobility,' who go so far as to demand free credits for themselves to the tune of 100 rubles per dessiatine. They are invited to serve on commissions, they are listened to with respect, and they have a decisive voice in cardinal questions affecting the economic life of the country. Yet who stands up in defence of the interests of the people, and where? Is it they, the Zemsky Nachalniks, perhaps? Is it for the people that agricultural labour squads are being projected? Was it not only the other day that it was declared, with a frankness bordering on cynicism, that the only reason the people have been granted allotments is to enable them to pay taxes and to perform services, as the Governor of Vologda put it in one of his circulars? He only formulated and expressed aloud the policy that the autocracy, or, more correctly, bureaucratic absolutism, is fatally pursuing."

However nebulous the ideas of the Narodopravtsi still are about the "people," whose interests they wish to espouse, and about "society," which they continue to regard as a trustworthy organ for the protection of the interests of labour, at any rate it must be admitted that the formation of the Narodnoye Pravo Party is a step forward, a step towards the complete abandonment of the illusions and dreams about "different paths for the fatherland," a step towards the fearless recognition of the actual paths and towards a search on this basis for elements for a revolutionary struggle. Here we clearly see a striving to form a democratic party. I say only a "striving," because, unfortunately, the Narodopravtsi do not adhere to their basic view consistently. They

still talk of amalgamation and union with the Socialists, refusing to realize that to draw the workers into mere political radicalism would only mean severing the working-class intellectuals from the working-class masses and condemning the working-class movement to impotence; for it can be strong only by a complete and all-round defence of the interests of the working class, by an economic struggle against capital, a struggle which merges inseparably with a political struggle against the servants of capital. They refuse to realize that the "amalgamation" of all the revolutionary elements can be much better achieved by the separate organization of the representatives of the different interests* and by the joint action in particular cases of the two parties. They still go on calling their party a "social-revolutionary" party (see the Manifesto of the Narodnoye Pravo Party, dated February 19, 1894), although at the same time they confine themselves exclusively to political reforms and most carefully evade our "vexed" socialist problems. A party which so ardently calls for a fight against

* They themselves protest against faith in the miracle-working powers of the intelligentsia; they themselves talk of the need to draw the people themselves into the struggle. But that requires that this struggle be bound up with definite everyday interests and, consequently, that a distinction be made between the different interests, and that they be drawn separately into the struggle. . . . Whereas if these separate interests are obscured by bare political demands comprehensible only to the intelligentsia, what will this mean but again turning back, again confining everything to the struggle of the intelligentsia, whose impotence has only just been admitted?

illusions should not foster illusions in others by the very first words of its own "manifesto"; it should not speak of *Socialism* where there is nothing but *constitutionalism*. But, I repeat, one cannot form a correct judgment of the Narodopravtsi unless one bears in mind that they spring from the Narodovoltsi. It must therefore be admitted that they are taking a step forward by basing an exclusively political struggle—unrelated to Socialism—on an exclusively political program. The Social-Democrats sincerely wish the Narodopravtsi success, wish that their party may grow and develop and that they may form closer ties with those social elements which take their stand by the present economic system* and whose *everyday* interests really are most intimately bound up with *democratism*.

The conciliatory, timid, sentimental and dreamy Narodism of the "friends of the people" cannot long withstand the assault when attacked from two sides: by the political radicals for being capable of expressing confidence in the bureaucracy and for not realizing the absolute necessity of a political struggle; and by the Social-Democrats, for pretending almost to be Socialists, although they have not the slightest relation to Socialism and not the slightest inkling of the causes of the oppression of the toiler or of the character of the class struggle now in progress.

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* (I.e., the capitalist system)—and not by the necessary rejection of this system and the waging of a ruthless struggle against it.

NOTES

1 Lenin wrote this book, *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats*, in 1894 (the first part was finished in April and the second and third parts in the summer of that year). He started on this book when he was still in Samara in 1892-93. At meetings of the Marxist circle in Samara he read papers in which he severely criticized the opponents of Marxism, the liberal-Narodniks V. V. (Vorontsov), Mikhailovsky, Yuzhakov and Krivenko, and these papers served as preparatory material for the book *What the "Friends of the People" Are*.

The book was published in separate parts. The first part was hectographed in St. Petersburg in the spring of 1894 and was circulated illegally in St. Petersburg and in other cities. In July 1894 a second edition of the first part was issued, printed in the same way. About a hundred copies of the first and second parts were printed in August by A. A. Ganshin, in Gorki (Vladimir Gubernia). Lastly, in September of that year, A. A. Vaneyev, in St. Petersburg, hectographed another fifty copies of the first part (this was the fourth edition) and approximately a similar number of copies of the third part. This edition had the following imprint on the cover: "Published by a provincial group of Social-Democrats." This imprint was made for the purpose of deceiving the authorities. The local organizations made copies of Lenin's work by the most diverse means: some were written out by hand, others were typewritten, etc. A group of Social-Democrats in the Borzna Uyezd of the Chernigov Gubernia made hectograph copies of the book.

The book circulated in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Vilna, Kiev, Chernigov, Poltava, Vladimir, Penza, Rostov-on-Don, Tiflis, Tomsk, and other cities.

Comrade Stalin, and the members of the circles which he conducted in the Theological Seminary in Tiflis, became acquainted with this work in 1897-98.

Lenin's book was well known to the Emancipation of Labour group and also to other Russian Social-Democratic organizations abroad.

Copies of the hectographed edition of the first and third parts were found in the beginning of 1923 in the Berlin Social-Democratic archives and at about the same time in the Public Library in Leningrad.

In the first, second and third editions of the *Collected Works* of V. I. Lenin this book was reproduced from the hectographed edition that was found in 1923.

In the fourth edition of the *Collected Works*, *What the "Friends of the People" Are* is reproduced from a new copy of the hectographed edition of which the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute came into possession in 1936. This copy bears numerous editorial revisions, which Lenin evidently introduced when preparing the book for publication abroad. All these revisions have been introduced in the present edition. In the hectographed editions of the first part of the book there were no italics, spaced letters or heavy type. The passages that were singled out for emphasis were indicated by quotation marks. In the present edition, in conformity with the authorized copy, the quotation marks in the respective passages have been replaced by italics, and a number of interpolations that were put in parentheses in the main text are here given as footnotes. This edition also includes Lenin's explanation to the table (Appendix I in the book) which had been omitted in previous editions of the *Collected Works* of V. I. Lenin. Thus, the present edition gives the exact text of this extremely important work of Lenin's.

The second part of the book, in which V. I. Lenin criticizes the political-economic views of the liberal-Narodnik S. N. Yuzhakov, has so far not been found.

Title page

[2] *Russkoye Bogatstvo*—a monthly magazine published from 1876 to the middle of 1918. In the beginning of the nineties of the nineteenth century the magazine became the organ of the liberal-Narodniks and was edited by Krivenko and Mikhailovsky. It preached conciliation with the tsarist government and the abandonment of all revolutionary struggle against it, waged a fierce struggle against Marxism, and baited the Russian Marxists. p. 9

[3] This refers to an article by N. K. Mikhailovsky entitled "Karl Marx Before the Tribunal of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky" published in the magazine *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, No. 10, October 1877. p. 12

[4] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Preface to the first German edition, New York 1939, p. XIX. p. 14

[5] Lenin here quotes from Marx's Preface to his *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. See Karl Marx, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow 1946, pp. 300-01. p. 18

[6] *Contrat Social* (*The Social Contract*)—one of the chief works of Jean Jacques Rousseau, which appeared in 1762. The idea running through this book is that every social system should be the result of a free agreement, or contract, between men. Although, at bottom, idealistic, the "social contract" theory, which was advanced on the eve of the French bourgeois revolution of the eighteenth century, nevertheless, played a revolutionary role. It expressed the demand for bourgeois equality, and was a call for the abolition of feudal caste privileges and for the establishment of a bourgeois republic. p. 18

[7] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, New York 1939, p. 367. p. 28

[8] This refers to Karl Marx's letter to *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, written at the end of 1877, in reply to an article by N. K. Mikhailovsky entitled "Karl Marx Before the Tribunal

of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky." This letter was copied and sent to Russia by Engels after Marx's death. Engels stated that this letter "for a long time circulated in Russia in manuscript copies taken from the French original, and later a Russian translation of it was published in *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* (No. 5—*Ed.*) in 1886 in Geneva, and later in Russia. This letter, like everything else that came from Marx's pen, attracted considerable attention in Russian circles." This letter of Marx's was first published in Russia in the magazine *Yuridichesky Vestnik*, No. 10, 1888. See the *Correspondence of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels 1846-1895*, New York 1936, pp. 352-355. p. 28

[9] See Frederick Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* (Part II. Political Economy. Subject Matter and Method), Moscow 1947, p. 224. p. 29

[10] This refers to the book *German Ideology*, which Marx and Engels wrote in 1845-46. For decades this work was kept hidden in the archives of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany and was first published in full in German by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in 1932. A Russian translation of this work has been published in 1933.

The characterization of this work quoted on the same page is taken from Frederick Engels' Preface to his *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*. See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1949, p. 325. p. 29

[11] See Frederick Engels' Preface to the first German edition of his *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1949, p. 156. p. 31

[12] *Gentile organization of society*—i.e., the primitive communal system. The following classical characterization of the primitive communal system is given in J. V. Stalin's work, *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*:

"The basis of the relations of production under the primitive communal system is that the means of production are socially owned. This in the main corresponds

to the character of the productive forces of that period. Stone tools, and, later, the bow and arrow, precluded the possibility of men individually combating the forces of nature and beasts of prey. In order to gather the fruits of the forest, to catch fish, to build some sort of habitation, men were obliged to work in common if they did not want to die of starvation, or fall victim to beasts of prey or to neighbouring societies. Labour in common led to the common ownership of the means of production, as well as of the fruits of production. Here the conception of private ownership of the means of production did not yet exist, except for the personal ownership of certain implements of production which were at the same time means of defence against beasts of prey. Here there was no exploitation, no classes." (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* [*Bolsheviks*], *Short Course*, Moscow 1949, p. 152.)

Morgan's book mentioned on page 31 is *Ancient Society*.

p. 34

13 *The fief or pomestiye system*—a system of feudal landownership which became established in Russia in the middle of the fifteenth century. Unlike the *votchina* or patrimony, which was the absolute and hereditary property of the boyars, the *pomestiye* was the conditional and temporary possession of the nobleman who was in the service of the state. A *pomestiye* was regarded as the property of the feudal seigneur and was originally granted to servants of the state as a reward for good service on the battlefield or at court. Gradually, the possession of *pomestiyes* became hereditary. In the middle of the seventeenth century the difference between the two forms of feudal landownership—the *votchina* and the *pomestiye*—began to be obliterated and the feudal rights of the owners of *votchinas* and *pomestiyes* gradually became equal. In the reign of Peter I, the *pomestiyes* definitely became the private property of the landed nobility. p. 38

14 *The International Working Men's Association*, known as the First International, was formed by Marx, in London, in the autumn of 1864. Headed by Marx and Engels, it

guided the economic and political struggle of the workers of different countries and strengthened their international solidarity, and conducted a struggle against the anarchist Proudhonists, Bakunists and other anti-Marxian trends. It practically ceased to exist in 1872. The historical importance of the First International is, as Lenin put it, that "it laid the foundation of the international organization of the workers in order to prepare for their revolutionary onslaught on capital." p. 42

[15] *Burenin, V.*—a contributor to the reactionary newspaper *Novoye Vremya* (*New Times*) who waged a slanderous and vicious campaign against all progressive trends in social thought. Lenin used his name as a synonym for dishonest methods of controversy. p. 42

[16] *Novoye Vremya* (*New Times*)—a newspaper which was published in St. Petersburg from 1868 to October 1917. It belonged to different publishers at different times and more than once changed its political trend. At first it was moderately liberal; in 1876 it became the organ of reactionary aristocratic and bureaucratic circles. In the pay of the tsarist government, it waged a struggle not only against the revolutionary, but also against the liberal-bourgeois movement.

In an article published in that paper on February 4, 1894, Burenin extolled N. K. Mikhailovsky for the struggle the latter was waging against the Marxists. p. 46

[17] See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1949, p. 155. p. 50

[18] Lenin here quotes Karl Marx's letter to Ruge, dated September 1843, as first published in the *Sotsial-Demokrat*, the literary and political review of the Emancipation of Labour group, Vol. IV, Geneva 1892. (See Marx-Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Band 1, Erster Halbband, S. 574.) p. 51

[19] A systematic exposition and further development of Marx's dialectical method are to be found in the works of

V. I. Lenin and J. V. Stalin. See particularly, Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, and Stalin's *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* in *Problems of Leninism* and the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course*, Chap. IV. p. 56

[20] *Vestnik Evropy* (*European Messenger*)—a monthly magazine which came out in St. Petersburg in 1866 and continued publication right up to the summer of 1918. It expressed the views of the Russian liberal bourgeoisie. From the beginning of the 'nineties onwards, it waged a systematic struggle against Marxism. p. 57

[21] The author of this comment, signed *I. K—n*, was Professor I. I. Kaufman of the St. Petersburg University. Marx regarded it as one of the best expositions of the dialectical method. See Preface to the Second Edition of *Capital*, Vol. I. p. 57

[22] Lower down (on pp. 61-68 of this book) Lenin quotes in his own translation a passage from Frederick Engels' *Anti-Dühring*. (Part I. Philosophy; chapter XIII. Dialectics. Negation of the Negation.) See Frederick Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, Moscow 1947, pp. 192-200. p. 61

[23] *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* (*Fatherland Notes*)—a magazine to which, beginning with 1839, V. Belinsky was a contributor. In 1868 the magazine came under the direction of the writers Nekrasov, Saltykov-Shchedrin, Yeliseyev, and others, and in that period it grouped around itself the revolutionary democratic intelligentsia. It was continuously subjected to the persecution of the censor and in 1884 was suppressed by the tsarist government. p. 70

[24] *Postoronny*—the pen name of N. K. Mikhailovsky. p. 70

[25] This refers to the following thesis formulated by Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.

"The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in

no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer.

"They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes." (See K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Moscow 1949, p. 65.) p. 74

[26] See Frederick Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* (Part I. Philosophy; Chapter IX. Morality and Law. Eternal Truths), Moscow 1947, p. 139. p. 76

[27] This refers to articles by N. K. Mikhailovsky entitled "Concerning the Russian Edition of Karl Marx's Book" (*Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, No. 4, April 1872) and "Karl Marx Before the Tribunal of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky" (*Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, No. 10, October 1877). p. 79

[28] Lenin here refers to Karl Marx's letter to Ruge of September 1843. See Marx-Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Band 1, Erster Halbband, S. 575. p. 84

[29] Lenin here refers to S. N. Yuzhakov, an ideologist of Narodism and one of the editors of the magazine *Russkoye Bogatstvo*. The political-economic views of this Narodnik (on the appraisal of Russian economic reality, the destiny of capitalism in Russia, the disintegration of the peasantry, etc.) were criticized by Lenin in Part II of his book *What the "Friends of the People" Are*. Neither the manuscript nor the hectographed edition of the second part (1894) has so far been found. p. 85

[30] *The post-Reform history of Russia*—i.e., after the reform of 1861 which abolished serfdom in Russia, and the reform of the administration, judiciary, etc., that followed it. In the opinion of V. I. Lenin, the reform of 1861 "was a bourgeois reform carried out by the serfowners. It was a step towards the conversion of Russia into a bourgeois monarchy." p. 92

[31] This refers to the Emancipation of Labour group, the first Russian Marxian group that was organized by G. V. Plekhanov in Geneva in 1883; it did a great deal to disseminate Marxism in Russia. An appraisal of the activities of this group and of the historical role it played is given in Chap. I of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course*, Moscow 1949, pp. 10-19, 30. p. 96

[32] This "Publisher's Note" is the postscript to the first edition of Part I of Lenin's work *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats*. "The 2nd and 3rd editions, which are now in course of preparation," mentioned in this postscript, refers to the second and third parts. p. 107

[33] This "Note to the Present Edition" is the postscript to the second edition of Part I of *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats* and was written in July 1894. p. 108

[34] *Yuridichesky Vestnik* (*The Legal Messenger*)—a monthly magazine of a bourgeois-liberal trend that was published in Moscow from 1867 to 1892. p. 115

[35] See N. F. Annensky's "Report on the Conditions of the Handicraftsmen in the Pavlovo District" (*Nizhegorodsky Vestnik Parokhodstva i Promyshlennosti*, Nos. 1, 2, and 3, 1891). p. 117

[36] This refers to I. M. Dementyev's book, *The Factory. What It Gives and What It Takes from the Population*. (Moscow 1893.) p. 120

[37] Nikolai—on, the pseudonym of N. F. Danielson, one of the ideologists of liberal Narodism of the eighties and nineties of the nineteenth century. p. 127

[38] The "figures for several uyezds" concerning the disintegration among the peasantry, which Lenin in this footnote

says he cited, were given in the second part of this book, which has not yet been found.

Lenin deals in detail with the disintegration of the peasantry in his *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (*Collected Works*, Vol. 3), particularly in Chap. II, entitled "The Disintegration of the Peasantry." p. 143

[39] *Quarterly possessors* (or quarter peasants)—the term applied in tsarist Russia to the former serfs on state land, the descendants of the minor government servants who, in the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, were settled on the borders of the Moscow State. For their service in protecting the frontiers, these settlers (Cossacks, Musketeers and soldiers) received, in temporary or hereditary possession, small plots of land amounting to a *chetvert* (literally: one-fourth; equal to about an acre). In 1719 these state settlers began to be called *odnodvortsi*, or single householders. At first, these *odnodvortsi* enjoyed various privileges and had the right to possess serfs. During the nineteenth century, however, they were gradually reduced to the level of ordinary peasants. By an order issued in 1866 the land of the *odnodvortsi* (the quarter lot) was recognized as their private property and passed to their descendants by inheritance. p. 146

[40] Here and elsewhere in this work Lenin quotes, in his own translation (into the Russian), from the book by I. A. Hourwich *The Economics of the Russian Village*, that was published in English in New York in 1892. It was published in Russian in 1896. The book contains valuable factual materialand was highly praised by Lenin. p. 147

[41] Lenin here quotes from Karl Marx's work "A Criticism of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right." See Marx-Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Band 1, Erster Halbband, S. 608. p. 161

[42] The volumes referred to are *Statistical Reports for the Moscow Gubernia*, Vol. V, Part I, 1879, and Vol. II, 1878. p. 172

43 *Pompadour*—a name typifying a tyrannical administrator, from a character portrayed by Saltykov-Shchedrin in his *Messieurs and Mesdames Pompadour*. p. 176

44 This refers to the book by V. N. Grigoryev entitled, *The Locksmith and Cutlery Handicraft Trades in the Pavlovo District* (1881), and the article by N. F. Annensky mentioned in explanatory note No. 35. p. 181

45 Lines from the poem by the Russian poet N. A. Nekrasov *The Sowers*. p. 189

46 *Gladstone's Land Bills*—the Land Bills introduced in the British House of Commons by the Liberal Minister Gladstone in the seventies and eighties of the nineteenth century. With the object of mitigating the conflict between the tenant farmers and the landlords and of winning the tenant farmers' votes, the Gladstone government put a slight curb upon the tyranny of the landlords who were evicting their tenants wholesale. The government also promised to settle the question of arrears in rent, to set up so-called "fair rent courts" (for a period of fifteen years), etc. Gladstone's Land Bills were an example of the social demagogy indulged in by the liberal bourgeoisie. p. 194

47 *Bismarck's workers' insurance*—the social insurance of workers against accidents, sickness, disablement and old age that was introduced in Germany by the Bismarck government in the eighties of the nineteenth century. Only a section of the workers came under the Bismarck insurance laws, and even then the scheme was a contributory one, the workers having to pay two-thirds of the contributions and the employers only one-third. Failing to suppress the working-class movement by means of the harsh antisocialist laws, Bismarck tried to break up the movement by means of sops to the workers. As is known, this policy also failed. p. 194

48 This refers to Saltykov-Shchedrin's story *The Liberal*. p. 197

49 *Zemsky Nachalnik*—a rural official in tsarist Russia appointed from the landed nobility and exercising administrative and magisterial rights.

Town mayors—the chairmen of City Dumas in which the representatives of the nobility and the big bourgeoisie had an overwhelming majority.

Zemstvo Administrations—the executive organs of local government (Zemstvos) in prerevolutionary Russia. The Zemstvos dealt with purely local matters bearing on the life of the rural population—road construction, hospitals, schools, etc. Landowners played a dominant part in their activities. p. 200

50 *Nedelya* (*Week*)—a weekly liberal Narodnik newspaper that was published in St. Petersburg from 1866 to 1901. It opposed the fight against the autocracy and advocated the so-called theory of "minor affairs," i.e., it called upon the intelligentsia to abandon the revolutionary struggle and to engage in "cultural" activities. p. 201

51 This refers to A. I. Herzen. See Karl Marx's letter to the editors of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*. p. 205

52 *Sozialpolitisches Centralblatt* (*Social-Political Central Journal*)—a magazine published by the Right wing of the German Social-Democratic Party. Began publication in 1891. p. 214

53 *Pobedonostsev, K. P.*—the Procurator-General of the Holy Synod, an extreme reactionary, inspirer of the reactionary policy pursued by Alexander III. p. 215

54 *The reptile press*—the venal magazines and newspapers that were in the pay of the tsarist government and grovelled at its feet. p. 218

55 *Yermolov, A. S.*—Minister for Agriculture and for State Property in the period of 1893-1905. Pursued a policy of preserving the survivals of serfdom and championed the interests of the feudal landowners.

Witte, S. Y.—one of the most outstanding Cabinet Ministers in tsarist Russia, for a long period (1892-1903) Min-

ister for Finance. By the measures he adopted in the spheres of finance, customs tariffs and railway construction in the interests of the big bourgeoisie, he promoted the development of capitalism in Russia. p. 219

56 This refers to a group of Socialist-Narodniks among the Russian revolutionary émigrés headed by N. I. Utin. This group published in Geneva a magazine entitled *Narodnoye Dyelo* (*The People's Cause*). In the beginning of 1870 it formed the Russian Section of the International Working Men's Association (the First International). On March 22, 1870, the General Council of the International accepted the affiliation of the Russian Section. At the request of the Section, Karl Marx undertook to represent it on the General Council. On March 24, Marx wrote to the members of the Russian Section: "I accept with pleasure the honourable commission you give me to act as your representative on the General Council." The members of the Russian Section of the First International supported Marx in his struggle against the anarchist Bakunists, conducted revolutionary propaganda in favour of the ideas for which the International stood, and strove to strengthen the connection between the Russian revolutionary movement and that in Western Europe. p. 223

57 *Engelhardt, A. N.*—a Narodnik journalist who became celebrated for his public activities in the sphere of agriculture and for his experiment in organizing rational farming on his own estate, Batishchevo, Smolensk Gubernia. Lenin describes this experiment in his book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, Chap. III, Section VI (*Collected Works*, Vol. 3). p. 225

58 *Sotsial-Demokrat*—a literary-political review published abroad by the Emancipation of Labour group in the period of 1890-92. In all, four issues appeared. Lenin here quotes from Plekhanov's article entitled "N. G. Chernyshevsky" that was published in the first issue of *Sotsial-Demokrat* in 1890, pp. 138-39. p. 227

59 *Otrezki* or "cut-off land"—the plots of land taken from the peasants by the landlords when serfdom was abolished

in Russia in 1861. The peasants were obliged to rent these plots from the landlords on usurious terms. p. 240

[60] *Arakcheyev, A. A.* (1769-1834)—a reactionary statesman of the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries who greatly influenced domestic and foreign policy during the reigns of Paul I and Alexander I. His name is associated with a whole period of unbridled police tyranny and arbitrary rule by the militarists often referred to as "Arakcheyevism." p. 242

[61] This refers to the Narodnoye Pravo (People's Rights) Party, an underground organization of democratic intellectuals that was formed in 1893 with the assistance of ex-members of the Narodnaya Volya Party. In the spring of 1894, the organization was suppressed by the tsarist government. This organization issued two program documents,

namely: "An Urgent Question" and "Manifesto." For Lenin's appraisal of the Narodnoye Pravo-ites as a political party, see this book pp. 289-93, and *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*, in *Selected Works*, Vol. I, part 1, Moscow 1950, p. 177. Subsequently, most of the members of the Narodnoye Pravo Party joined the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. p. 243

[62] Lenin here quotes from the Russian 1872 edition of Karl Marx's *Capital*, Vol. I. See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, New York 1939, p. 789. p. 262

[63] This refers to Nik. —on's (N. F. Danielson's) *Essays on Our Post-Reform Social Economy*, St. Petersburg 1893. p. 267

[64] Lenin here quotes in his own translation from Engels' *The Housing Question*, Preface to the second German edition. See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow 1950, pp. 499, 502, 503. p. 273

[65] Lenin here quotes from the Russian 1872 edition of Karl Marx's *Capital*, Vol. I. See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, New York 1939, p. 448. p. 274

[66] Lenin has in view the theses enunciated by Marx in Chap. II of his *The Poverty of Philosophy*. See Marx-Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Band 6, Erste Abteilung, S. 191. p. 275

[67] Lenin here quotes from Karl Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program*. See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1949, p. 28. p. 276

[68] *Manilovism*—smug complacency, inactivity, futile day-dreaming; from Manilov, a character in Gogol's *Dead Souls*. p. 279

[69] See Marx's Preface to the Second Edition of *Capital*, Vol. I, New York 1939, p. XXXI. p. 286

[70] Lenin here quotes from Marx's letter to Ruge (September 1843). See Marx-Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Band 1, Erster Halbband, S. 575. p. 287

[71] *Naidenovs, Morozovs, Kazis and Byelovs*—big Russian financiers and industrialists. p. 290

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